

Moving Forward in Carmarthenshire

ANNUAL REPORT for 2021/2022

on the Council's Corporate Strategy 2018-2023

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

October 2022



carmarthenshire.gov.wales

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



We welcome constructive comments on our strategies and services. Feedback from customers and service users is essential in identifying opportunities for improvement and we hope that if you have any comments or suggestions that you believe would help that you will share them with us. Please contact us at **Corporate Performance Management**, Carmarthenshire County Council, County Hall, Carmarthen SA31 1JP or email at performance@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

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COVID-19 AND RECOVERY

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

START WELL



CHILDREN AND SCHOOLS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LIVE WELL



ECONOMY

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

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

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

What have we delivered?	
<i>More than 1,100 jobs have already been created and over 700 jobs safeguarded.</i>	<i>We have delivered over £66 million COVID-19 Business Recovery Funds on behalf of the Welsh Government</i>
<i>We have awarded contracts to local businesses, providing skilled work opportunities in the local economy and safeguarding jobs.</i>	<i>We have successfully delivered six jobs’ fairs in each of the primary towns, to support sectors experiencing acute recruitment challenges.</i>
<i>We have engaged with well over 3,200 local businesses and provided just under 900 people with training support.</i>	

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

AGE WELL



SOCIAL CARE

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

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

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

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

HEALTHY, SAFE AND PROSPEROUS ENVIRONMENT



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

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

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

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

GOVERNANCE



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

Information Technology

The Council's decision, before the pandemic, to spend £1.9m of investment in agile working initiatives, including providing staff with the right equipment to allow them to work in a more agile and flexible way, together with improvements to the resilience of the IT network, has helped support an almost

seamless move to homeworking. Having the right equipment in place meant that staff could be operational from home immediately with no disruption to customers.

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

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

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

Workforce

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

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

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



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

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

INTRODUCTION TO OUR ANNUAL REPORT

This Annual Report is produced by the Council because we believe we should provide comprehensive and balanced information to the public about our services, so that they can see how we are performing and the challenges we are facing. It is also a statutory duty under the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021 and the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 (See Appendix 1).

This annual report and self-assessment addresses two legal duties:

 Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015		Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021 	
Requirement	How we meet our statutory obligations	Requirement	
Demonstrate the extent to which well-being objectives are contributing to the achievement of the well-being goals	This will be outlined in the Annual Report for each Well-being Objective and outlined in Appendix 1b	The Act requires each council in Wales to keep under review, through self-assessment, the extent to which it is meeting the 3 ' <i>performance requirements</i> ', that is the extent to which: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is exercising its functions effectively 2. It is using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively 3. Its governance is effective for securing the above 	
Take all reasonable steps to meet their well-being objectives	We set out steps for each Well-being Objective (WBO) with targets and actions. Progress on these commitments is provided in each WBO		
Demonstrate well-being objectives are consistent with the sustainable development principle	We include a Case Study within each Well-being Objective		
		Our Annual Governance Statement will support this	
		See summary judgements for each Well-being objective	Conclusions as to the extent to which the performance requirements were met during that financial year
	Each Well-being Objective concludes with an Action Plan		Any actions to be taken, or that have already been taken, to increase the extent to which performance requirements will be met

Our Approach to self-assessment is via our Well-being Objectives

Using well-being objectives to frame the self-assessment enables the Council to integrate the reporting requirements of both the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act into a single report.

This approach provides the context within which we exercise our functions, use resources, and ensure governance is effective:

- It ensures the self-assessment is strategic, focusing on the organisation, rather than individual services and on the extent to which the Council is achieving its well-being objectives and intended outcomes.
- It allows us to reflect at a strategic level on how all our functions (including corporate activities) are contributing to the achievement of our well-being objectives, how we are operating and what action we need to take to improve further and continue to provide effective services now and for the long-term.
- Using well-being objectives as the overarching framework encourages a more holistic view of Council performance, recognising that many services 'join-up' and contribute to one or more wellbeing objective.
- We continue to manage individual service performance via Divisional and Departmental Business Plans.

Managing Performance in Carmarthenshire County Council

Our Performance Management Framework is based on a Plan/Do/Review cycle and we have strengthened it to enhance self-assessment and will develop it further to reflect the expectations of the Act and statutory guidance.

Our Performance Management Framework - 'Wedding Cake'



Improvements made during 2021/22

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

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

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

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

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

Recognise/Grow/Together

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

Governance

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

① Annual Governance Statement

GOVERNANCE ISSUES ACTION PLAN			
ISSUE REF	NEW GOVERNANCE ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT		
	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	TARGET DATE
AGS 2021/22 No.1	Develop recruitment strategy and workforce plan alongside implementation of new recruitment software to ensure recruitment service can be streamlined and maintained.	People Services Manager	March 2023
AGS 2021/22 No.2	Set up governance group to oversee development of Reward and Benefit hub	People Services Manager	May/June 2022
AGS 2021/22 No. 3	Review employment safeguarding framework and develop training programme for recruiting managers	People Services Manager	March 2023

Working with Partners

Swansea Bay City Deal

The Swansea Bay City Deal is an unprecedented investment of up to £1.3 billion across a portfolio of nine headline projects and programmes delivering a total of 35 individual projects throughout the counties of Swansea, Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot and Pembrokeshire.

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

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

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

PARTNERIAETH

PARTNERIAETH was established following the abolition of ERW, as a regional service to support schools. This was done in partnership with Swansea and Pembrokeshire Councils. A new Joint Committee was established, and a Legal Agreement was developed to manage the work of the new entity. Core staff have been restructured to create a team of officers to support and complement school improvement activities in the three counties. A Chief Officer and Senior Management Team have been appointed to lead on partnership working and to work to meet the specific needs of the partners and the Welsh Government. Work continues to strengthen governance, monitoring and holding PARTNERIAETH to account for its contribution to school improvement in the region.

South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC)

The South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) has been established as a regional corporate body by Welsh Ministers. Membership consists of the Executive leaders of Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea Councils, along with a member of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and a member of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority. The CJC will lead on 'Place' based policy interventions covering the South West Wales spatial region in the areas of the Strategic Development Plan, Regional Transport Plan and Economic well-being.

Carmarthenshire Public Services Board's (PSB)

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

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

Consultation undertaken by the Council

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Evidence suggests that there has been an increase in participation of online consultations. Specifically, when evaluating comparable consultations. For example, the Welsh in Education strategic plan consultation in 2017 received 21 completes whilst in 2021 the consultation received 854. Additionally, a recent Housing and regeneration masterplan received 2522 completed surveys in comparison to 189 in a similar survey run in 2018. The increase in participation is attributed to the closer relationship developed with the Media and Marketing team ensuring that consultations are promoted on social media and corporate website and are sent to all key stakeholders.

Equality and Diversity

Strategic Equality Plans (SEPs) are important documents that set out how public bodies will consider the needs of groups with protected characteristics, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. This is intended to ensure that all individuals receive just and equitable treatment in respect of service delivery and strategy/policy formulation.

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

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

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

We are continuing to implement the **Welsh Language Standards** across the Council with regular dialogue with the Welsh Language Commissioner's Officer. During the year we have undertaken targeted messaging with Council services on identifying and recording linguistic choice of service users, further to feedback from an investigation held by the Commissioner's Office. Messages about the Standards are conveyed to staff through presentations by the Policy and Involvement Team, through the communication streams maintained by Marketing and Media and through the Departmental Language Leaders.

The **Welsh Language County Strategic Forum**, which continues to be led by the Council and includes representation from the County's language promotion organisations, as well as public bodies with language officers, has also continued with its role of developing a programme of promoting the Welsh language in the County and instigated much joint planning for the implementation of the Carmarthenshire Promotion Action Plan, in line with the Promotion standards. The forum met four times and specific attention was given to apprenticeships and post-16 education, the Language in our communities, priority areas and the Local Development Plan.

How we measure the success of our Well-being Objectives

Success Measures

The Well-being Future Generations Act promotes a shift in focus from service productivity to all public bodies working together to progress outcomes that improves the quality of life of citizens and communities, both now and in the future. We have a suite of indicators we use to measure the success of our Well-being Objectives; a list of these measures can be seen in *Appendix 2*.

Other Assessment Information

Citizen Satisfaction

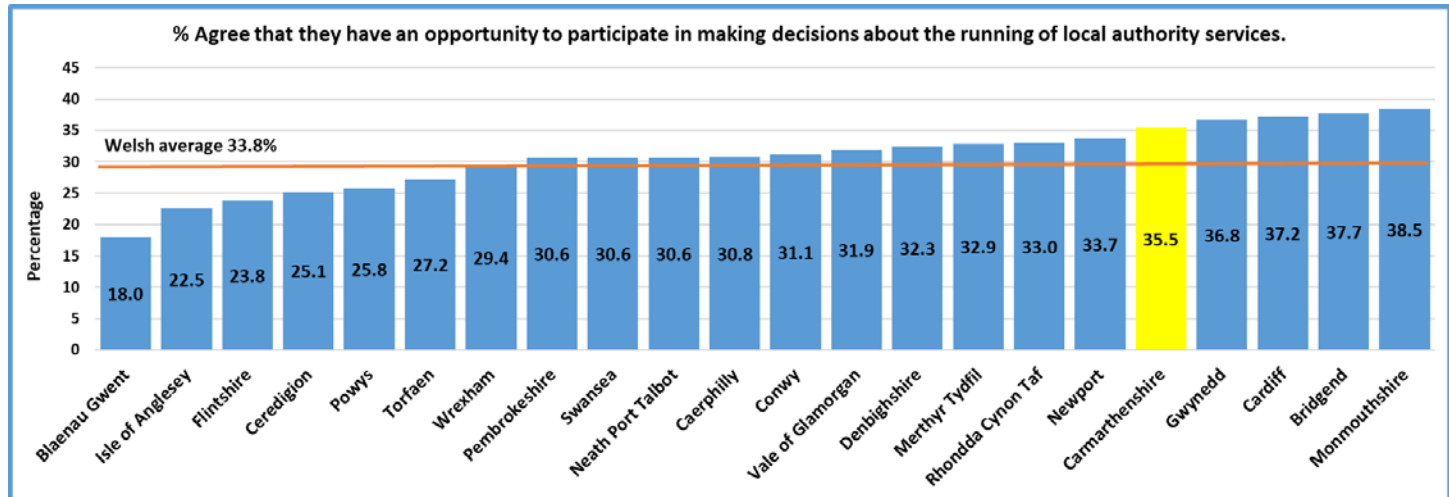


National Survey for Wales

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

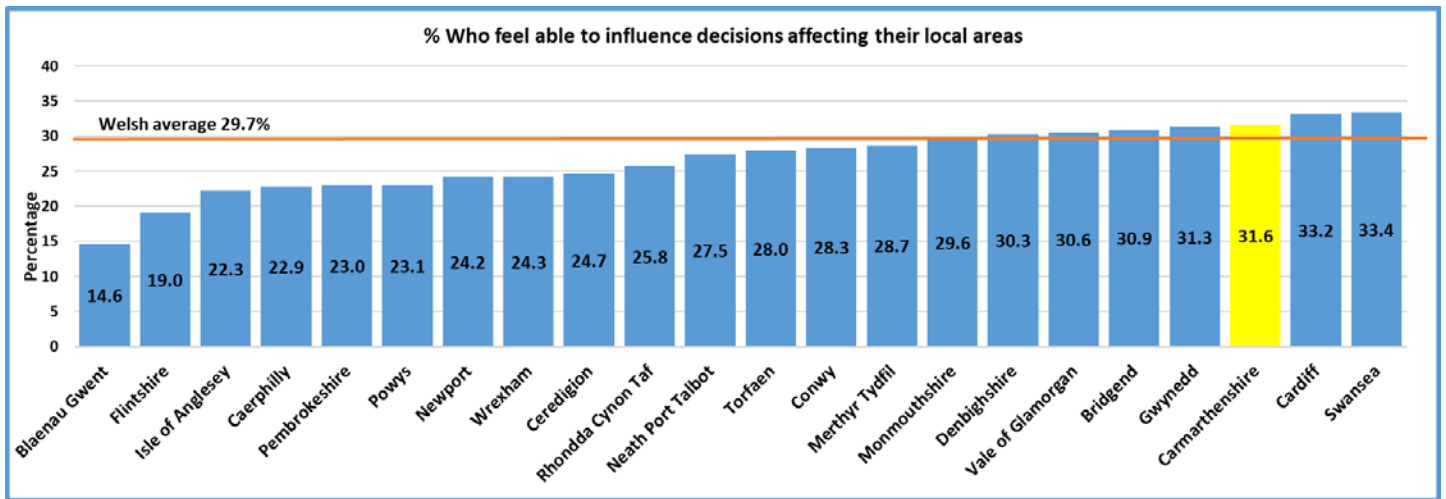
Since the start of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in 2020, the National Survey has taken place over the phone instead of face-to-face as previously. Some results from previous years are included to provide context, therefore care should be taken when making direct comparisons.

Local Authority Services



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

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



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

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

We have extracted the results currently available at Local Authority level and ranked the results for all 22 authorities from worst position (22nd) to best (1st) - See **Appendix 3**. Please note that not all of these results are attributable to the Councils performance



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

Regulatory Verdict

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



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



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



<https://careinspectorate.wales/>

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

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



Well-being Objectives

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

2. Help children live healthy lifestyles.

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

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

5. Creating more jobs and growth throughout the county.

6. Increase the availability of rented and affordable homes.

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

8. Support community cohesion, resilience, and safety.

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

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

11. Improving the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity.

12. Promoting Welsh language and culture.

13. Better Governance and use of Resources

Cabinet Members and the Well-being Objectives

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL



Cllr. Darren Price
LEADER

WBO5 - Creating more jobs and growth throughout the county

WBO13 - Better Governance and use of Resources

CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES



Cllr. Linda Evans
DEPUTY LEADER

WBO4 - Tackling poverty

WBO6 - Increase the availability of rented and affordable homes

WBO8 - Support community cohesion, resilience and safety

CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & WELSH LANGUAGE



Cllr. Glynog Davies

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

WBO2 – Help children live healthy lifestyles (Childhood Obesity)

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

WBO12 - Promoting Welsh Language and Culture

CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES



Cllr. Jane Tremlett

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

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

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

CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION, LEISURE, CULTURE & TOURISM



Cllr. Gareth John

WBO2 – Help children live healthy lifestyles (Childhood Obesity)

WBO5 - Creating more jobs and growth throughout the county

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

WBO12 - Promoting Welsh Language and Culture

CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES



Cllr. Alun Lenny

WBO13 - Better Governance and use of Resources

CABINET MEMBER FOR RURAL AFFAIRS & PLANNING POLICY



Cllr. Ann Davies

WBO5 - Creating more jobs and growth throughout the county

WBO8 - Support community cohesion, resilience and safety

WBO10 - Look after the environment now and for the future

CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE, DECARBONISATION & SUSTAINABILITY



Cllr. Aled Vaughan Owen

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

WBO8 - Support community cohesion, resilience and safety

WBO10 - Look after the environment now and for the future

CABINET MEMBER FOR ORGANISATION & WORKFORCE



Cllr. Philip Hughes

WBO5 - Creating more jobs and growth throughout the county

WBO8 - Support community cohesion, resilience and safety

WBO13 - Better Governance and use of Resources

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, WASTE & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES



Cllr. Edward Thomas

WBO10 - Look after the environment now and for the future

WBO11 - Improve the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity

Start Well





Well-being Objective 1

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

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

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

Why this Well-being Objective is important

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

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

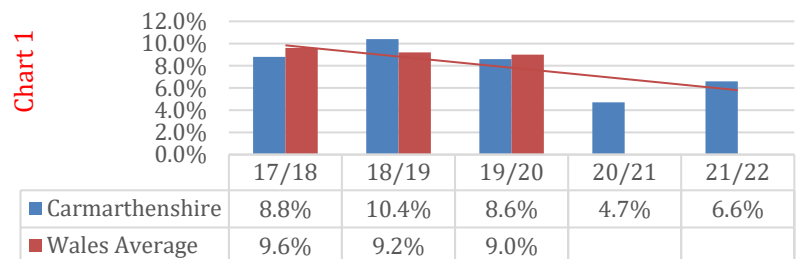
Success Measures / Explaining the Results

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

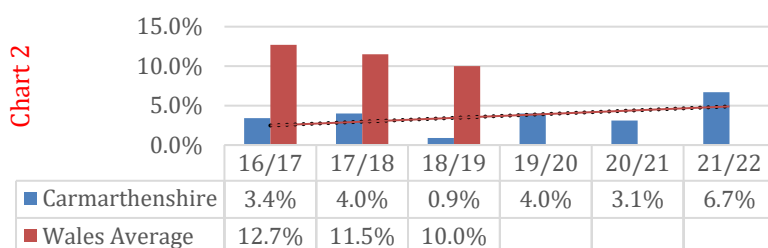


Of the 167 children looked after up to 31 March 2022, 11 children experienced 3 or more placement moves. This is a slightly higher result than last year of 4.7% with 7 of the 148 looked after children experiencing 3 or more placements. The children who experienced moves had Adverse Childhood Experiences, are less settled and have challenging and complex needs. We continued to focus on maintaining placement stability with good placement support being offered across the service to achieve this. *(See Chart 1)*

% of Looked After Children on 31 March who have had 3 or more placements during the year



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




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

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

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

Supporting Families

INTERNAL AUDIT	SAFEGUARDING - CHILDREN	ASSURANCE RATING						
	During the year Internal Audit looked at Safeguarding referrals, to ensure that relevant policies and procedures have been established and relevant legislation is complied with.	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>HIGH</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>ACCEPTABLE</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LOW</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	HIGH		ACCEPTABLE	✓	LOW	
	HIGH							
	ACCEPTABLE	✓						
LOW								
<p>COMMENT</p> <p>An action plan to address identified issues was agreed and these are monitored on PIMS. a follow up review will take place in the next audit plan year.</p>								


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

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

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

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

External Regulatory Findings

 <p>REGULATORY REPORT</p>	<p>In November 2021, Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) published its Assurance Check 2021 letter on Carmarthenshire County Council</p> <p>In summary:</p> <p>Children’s Social Care Assurances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Approachable and supportive leaders</i> • <i>Culture of co-production and personal outcomes being developed with people</i> • <i>Clarity in operational methodology</i> • <i>Strong multi-agency cooperation</i> • <i>Positive integrated approach to a culture of prevention through joint working</i> • <i>Low children looked after population</i> • <i>Makes a positive contribution to the well-being of people in the pandemic period</i>
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Additional Learning Needs

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

THE NEW ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS SYSTEM

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

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

Key changes include:

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

CASE STUDY

Process of admission to school:

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

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

Progress in school? What have they achieved?

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

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

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

⦿ Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Provision

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

- Primary – 64
- Secondary - 84

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

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

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

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

The significant increase in demand experienced as a result of:

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

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

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

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

Childcare Provision

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

Is anyone better off?



JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2021



OCTOBER '21 TO MARCH '22

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Can we come here every day?"



What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Supporting Families		
1	We will continue to transform children's social work practice through a Relationship based approach that incorporates systemic thinking and the principles of Signs of Safety. <i>(PIMS ref. 15351)</i>	March 2023	John Fleming
2	We will continue effective management oversight & challenge of Assessments & Care & Support plans to ensure they are outcome focused, evidencing the voice of the child, & reflect the underpinning principles of the Social Services & Well-being Act (SSWBA). <i>(15352)</i>	March 2023	John Fleming
3	We will review and monitor the implementation of the Corporate Parenting Strategy ensuring the council fulfils its Corporate Parenting role and that our looked after children and care leavers have the opportunity to reach their full potential. <i>(15368)</i>	March 2023	Rebecca Robertshaw
4	We will continue to develop and deliver the early intervention support services (0-25) for disadvantaged children, young people, and families across the county in line with the Family Support Strategy, utilising opportunities for integrating services across the Children and Communities Grant and flexible funding opportunities with the Housing Support Grant. <i>(15356)</i>	March 2023	Noeline Thomas
5	We will maintain the focus on increasing the range of placements to ensure placement stability and stability in education in respect of looked after children, including accommodation through the implementation of an in-house supported lodgings service. <i>(15375)</i>	March 2023	Jayne Meredith
6	We will continue to aim to reduce the number of children becoming Looked After and number of care proceedings in accordance with our LAC reduction target as agreed with Welsh Government, utilising appropriately Edge of Care (EOC), Integrated Family Support Team (IFST) and Family Intervention Team (FIT). <i>(15364)</i>	March 2023	Jayne Meredith
B	Additional Learning Needs		
1	We will continue to ensure the Council fully responds and complies with the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs transformation programme. <i>(15453)</i>	March 2023	Rebecca Williams
2	We will continue to support schools to develop their person centred planning approaches to identify need, deliver personalised additional learning provision and provide holistic integrated responses through multi-agency working. <i>(16126)</i>	March 2023	Rebecca Williams
C	Childcare Provision		
1	We will work towards addressing the gaps identified in our fifth Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2022-27) and accompanying Action Plan and continue to promote and further develop Welsh medium childcare within the County. We will support the childcare sector to recover from the Pandemic and remain sustainable. <i>(15357)</i>	March 2023	Noeline Thomas
2	We will share the findings of the new Play Sufficiency Assessment (2022-27) with key stakeholders and partners and agree and implement the 2022/2023 Action Plan to address the gaps identified to ensure that local children and young people have access to wide and varied play opportunities and experiences. <i>(15359)</i>	March 2023	Noeline Thomas



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



Well-being Objective 2

Start Well - Help children live healthy lifestyles

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

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

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

Why this Well-being Objective is important

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



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

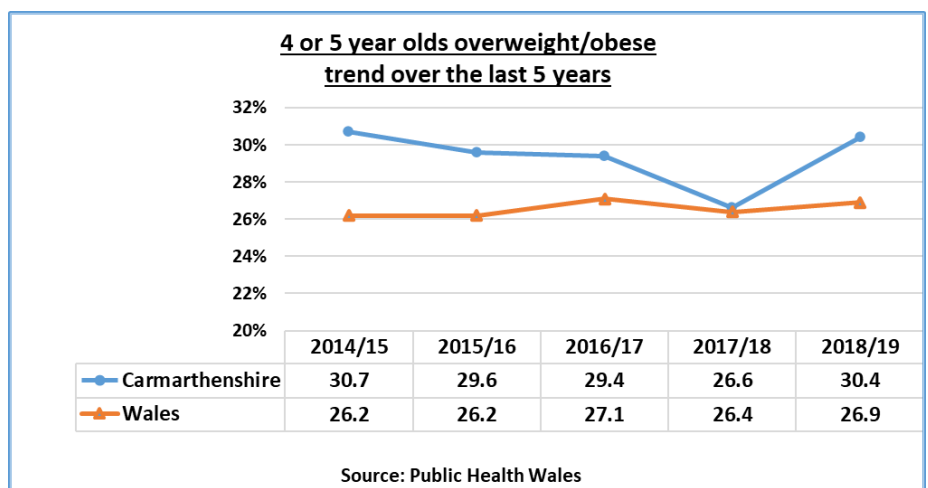
30.4% of children are overweight or obese (2018/19)

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



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

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



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

Physical Activity

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



Mental Health

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

Healthy Eating

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

Raising Awareness

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

Flying Start

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

Early Years Transformation Programme

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

Is anyone better off?

LEARNING IN THE OUTDOORS

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



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



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

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

What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

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



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



Well-being Objective 3

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

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

Why this Well-being Objective is important

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



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

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



6th highest in Wales
Source: StatsWales



93.9% Attendance at Primary Schools

93.5% Attendance at Secondary Schools
Source: StatsWales

95% are satisfied with their child's primary school



(Up on the previous year of 84%)

89% in Wales

Source: National Survey for Wales

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



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

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

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

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

Improvement in pupil and young people progress, wellbeing and outcomes

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

Address low School Attendance

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

An excellent school in the right place

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

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

Workforce development and succession planning

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

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

The development of Welsh in all our services

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

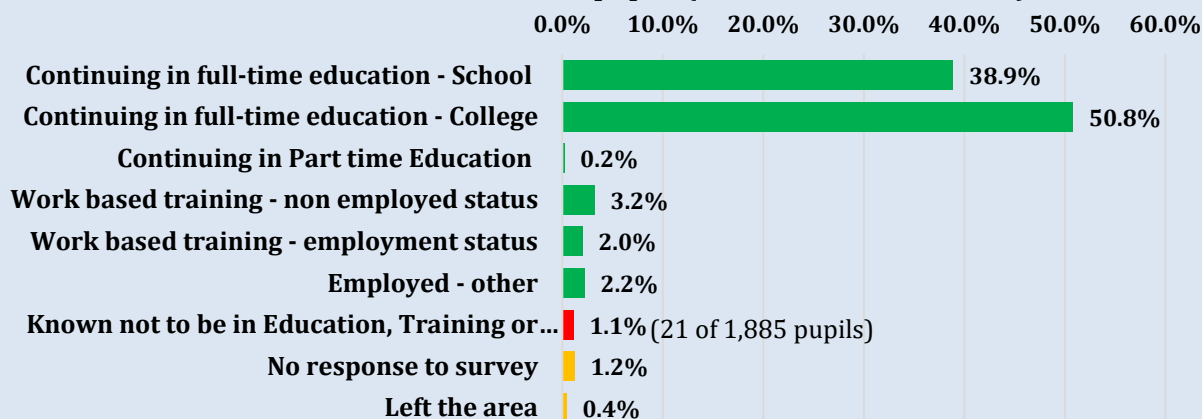
Focus on skills demands and employability to ensure that local and regional demands are met

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

Youth Engagement and Progression Framework

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

Destination data for Carmarthenshire Y11 pupils (Academic Year 2020-21)

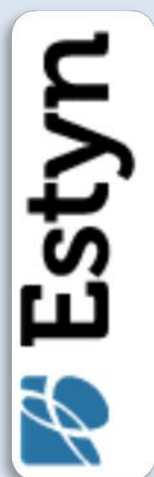


European Social Fund projects

- ⊙ We continue to explore alternative funding sources to replace European Social Funded projects, developing funding bids. The Chair of the Education and Children Scrutiny Committee wrote to Welsh Government to raise concerns about the delivery of NEET work into the future. Welsh Government responded that they are still awaiting the UK Government's plans to replace EU funding.

REGULATORY REPORT

Assurance and Risk Assessment – Emerging Risks and Next Steps (3 February 2022)



Assurances:

- Leaders have a good understanding of issues in the authority including around schools causing concern.
- Leaders maintained the good communication between departments throughout the pandemic to ensure that support for schools and other providers was available quickly.
- A substantial number of primary schools have been removed from Estyn Review.
- Pre-inspection reports show that the authority generally knows its schools well.
- Local Authority is proactive in increasing Welsh medium provision in the primary sector.
- Local Authority officers appear to have suitable plans in place to deal with the issues regarding leadership of smaller schools, for example by federating or merging them.
- The authority has supported schools and providers to understand and embed the new Additional Learning Needs Act.
- Effective scrutiny arrangements.

Concerns:

- There are a very few primary schools in a statutory category.
- With the local authority leaving ERW, there is uncertainty over some arrangements with Partneriaeth.
- Recruiting headteachers to lead a few primary schools is causing concern.
- Although overall, the number of pupils who did not progress from year 10 to 11 in Carmarthenshire is slightly below the national average for the last two years, the rates of pupils who cannot be matched to a destination are high in a minority of schools over the last two years.
 - Budget balances in schools

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT



A review of the current provision for early years education, childcare and play opportunities. The report outlines 20 recommendations. At Cabinet on the 31 January 2022 the recommendations of the Education and Children's Scrutiny Committee's Task and Finish Group to review Carmarthenshire's Education Admissions Policy was approved.

Sustainable School Gardens

School gardens and community connections are also gaining momentum across Carmarthenshire. An excellent example of working with the wider community and connecting with organisations such as Incredible Edibles has been witnessed at Ysgol Pembrey. The school has developed a productive and sustainable garden which includes numerous raised beds and a well-stocked polytunnel. The success of the garden is a result of all learners taking part in the planting, watering and weeding. A whole school programme of maintenance and management with delicious produce made available for the local community.



Ysgol Bro Dinefwr has established an impressive outdoor learning space. The school has a multi-purpose outdoor learning area to facilitate hands-on learning and enable delivery of the Curriculum for Wales. They have worked closely with organisations, local businesses and charities on a number of projects including a large outdoor learning area, an outdoor performance area and a peace garden.

Angharad, Year 13 pupil, *"I think, especially in light of the growing environmental movement that our age group has been so involved in, it's really nice to have something where we have a real sense of urgency, and we can be involved on lots of different levels."*

Cerys, Year 12, *"It's a matter of our lives now. I think it should be important to everyone, and this is why we've started the outdoor learning area, so that we can protect the environment and try and combat climate change."*

Chloe, Year 9, *"This whole garden, it's supposed to focus on the environment and appreciating the world around us and I think it brings that back home to pupils in the school - because to have this area where it's full of natural beauty, it makes us appreciate what we've got here."*





[Climate change: Carmarthenshire school's zero-carbon secondary bid - BBC News](#)



Carmarthenshire Outdoor Schools

The Carmarthenshire Outdoor Schools Network (CODS) launched its programme for 2022-23 in late March as a part of Outdoor Learning Week, Wales. The CODS programme offers all Carmarthenshire schools the opportunity to share good practice, resources and work collaboratively. A professional dialogue to ensure all schools are supported and confident to develop purposeful learning in the outdoors. The aim of the network is to offer opportunities for all learners to appreciate and connect with nature and become ethical and informed citizens of today and the future. A group of six Carmarthenshire schools are currently working in strong partnership with Natural Resources Wales and the Brechfa Windfarm Company. All six schools visit the Brechfa Forest site each term. As a result of this project the schools are currently developing a range of curriculum resources which will be available in September 2022.

Climate Action Consultation Group

The Climate Action Consultation Group was launched in November 2021 during the week of COP26. The group was formed to action an eight-point Climate Action Manifesto which was developed as part of the global citizenship programme, Walk the Global Walk. The Climate Action Manifesto was approved unanimously by the full Executive Board in October 2021. A formal consultation meeting takes place each term which offers an opportunity for the group, invited guests, local councillors and council officers to discuss issues relating to climate change and implement their manifesto's recommendations. The consultation group meetings are chaired by the students and ensures their thoughts and concerns on climate issues are shared across a broad platform. At the last meeting students met with Deputy Minister for Climate Change Lee Waters to highlight how we can reduce the use of single use plastics. Future discussions will include reducing food waste in schools, climate change gardening and sustainable school transport initiatives. [News Article](#)

What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Improvement in pupil and young people progress, wellbeing and outcomes (Abbrev.)		
1	Considering the impact of COVID 19, we will support our schools to ensure the wellbeing and progress of all learners, including those who are vulnerable, eligible for free school meals or looked after. <i>(15459)</i>	March 2023	Elin Forsyth
2	We will base a new suite of measures based on the on the new WG measures when published. <i>(15415)</i>	March 2023	tbc
B	Address low School Attendance		
1	Improve attendance reporting systems to enable challenge to schools. <i>(16127)</i>	March 2023	Allan Carter
C	An excellent school in the right place		
1	We will review the MEP, bearing in mind COVID-19 implications, and initiate a new programme. <i>(14998)</i>	March 2023	Sara Griffiths
D	Workforce development and succession planning		
1	We will ensure greater headteacher engagement in collaborating on our strategic development and review of progress. <i>(16128)</i>	March 2023	Elin Forsyth
2	Further strengthen our approach to developing the 'self-improving' school, facilitating collaboration and sharing effective practice, basing our approach on the principles of a school as a learning organisation. <i>(16129)</i>	March 2023	Elin Forsyth
3	Develop a new recruitment drive with assistance from HR and Communications colleagues in order to attract more applicants for the current vacancies, this will form a key part of the new Workforce Strategy being developed for the Council. <i>(16130)</i>	March 2023	Elin Forsyth
E	The development of Welsh in all our services		
1	Endeavour to implement a purposeful and robust 10 year WESP for all stakeholders. <i>(15434)</i>	March 2023	Catrin Griffiths
2	We will work with the County's schools to move them along the Welsh language continuum and also ensure that individual pupils within relevant schools are provided with opportunities to continue with their Welsh medium education throughout all key stages. <i>(15433)</i>	March 2023	Catrin Griffiths
3	We will increase the number of teachers and support staff who can confidently teach through the medium of Welsh. <i>(15032)</i>	March 2023	Catrin Griffiths
F	Focus on skills demands and employability to ensure that local and regional demands are met		
1	We will continue with the design of the Carmarthenshire Curriculum in partnership with schools and other providers, framed within the national context. We will pursue opportunities to link corporate and economic strategy with the design of the new curriculum <i>(15424)</i>	March 2023	Aeron Rees
2	We will dovetail local opportunities for curriculum enrichment and extension with the national architecture with a view towards developing a Carmarthenshire Learner Offer. <i>(15425)</i>	March 2023	Aeron Rees
G	Youth Engagement and Progression Framework		
1	We will continue to use the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework and the Vulnerability Assessment Profile as a means of effectively engaging those children and young people that are NEET/at risk of NEET. <i>(15408)</i>	March 2023	Gill Adams
H	European Social Fund projects		
1	We will ensure continuation of planning and delivery of the local elements of the European Social Fund (ESF) projects. <i>(15441)</i>	March 2023	Gill Adams



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

Live Well



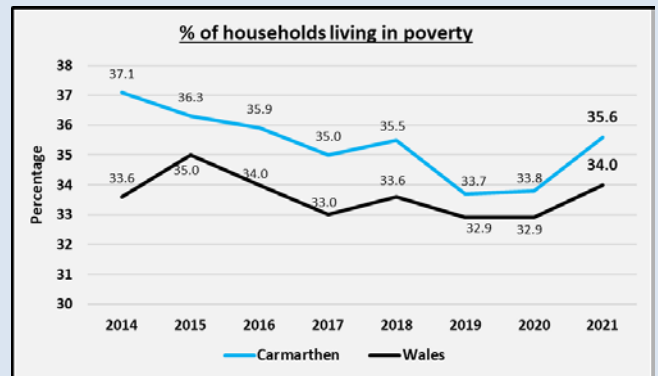


Well-being Objective 4

Live Well - Tackle poverty by doing all we can to prevent it, helping people into work and improving the lives of those living in poverty

The number of households in Carmarthenshire living in poverty has increased

During 2021, **29,444** households in Carmarthenshire were classed as living in poverty, this is an increase on the previous year of 27,691.
In work poverty is an increasingly common problem.



Poverty is defined as when a "household income is less than 60% of the GB median income" (in 2021 less than £19,642)

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- ⦿ Poverty and deprivation have serious detrimental effects, impacting across all aspects of well-being.
- ⦿ It limits the opportunities and prospects for children and young people and damages the quality of life for all. The UN report [Leaving no one behind](#) outlines the imperative of inclusive development.
- ⦿ Poverty is too often an intergenerational experience which poses a significant threat to experiencing positive well-being both now, and in the future.
- ⦿ Carmarthenshire has 5 areas within the most deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) in Wales (there are 191 in this category - that is within the 10% most deprived). [Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation \(WIMD 2019\) - Stats Wales](#)
- ⦿ Carmarthenshire is now seeing its highest levels of child poverty in recent years (31.3%), which is a similar pattern across Wales. [UK Government Children in low income families \(March 2021\)](#)



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

35.6% of households are living in poverty



Previously 34% (2020)
Source: CACI Paycheck

50.5% of households threatened with homelessness were successfully prevented from becoming homeless
Previous year 46.4%



17.9% gap in the results of pupils receiving Free School Meals and those who don't (2019/20)
(19.7% gap in the previous year – 2018/19)

Source: Stats Wales



12% of households are living in material deprivation (2021/22)
Reduced from previous year 11.3% (2019/20)

Source: National Survey for Wales

Households Living in Poverty

- ⦿ Well over a third (35.6% or 29,444) of our households are living in poverty which is a concern and has increased in the last year, this is the 8th highest % in Wales and above the Welsh average of 34%. 24 wards exhibit rates higher than the Carmarthenshire average, suggesting that the effects of poverty are not felt equally across the county. As food prices, energy bills and general costs continue to rise across the UK it is becoming harder for households to stay above the poverty line. Wages are not rising to meet the extra costs. This means that more working households are experiencing poverty. This has been compounded by the impact of Covid on job losses particularly in the tourism and hospitality sector. The effects of the pandemic were not felt equally by all, evidence suggested that the effects are felt disproportionately by the younger generation and those from low-income households.

Child Poverty

- ⊙ 30.6% of children in Wales are living in poverty, an increase of 1.6% over the last five years. The figures for Carmarthenshire show a 2% increase over the same time period, with 31.3% of children living in poverty.
- ⊙ This is the 10th highest level of all local authorities in Wales and the joint fifth highest rate of change over the last five years.
- ⊙ At a Wales level, the largest proportion of children living in poverty live in workless households. However, more concerning is the increasing rate at which children living in working households are living in poverty.
- ⊙ At a Wales level 17% of children in poverty live in households where all adults are in work, an increase of 5% from 12% over the last ten years.

Homelessness Prevention

- ⊙ As a result of reviewing operational practices (listed below), we have adopted a new approach to withdrawn cases, better reflecting the positive outcomes for applicants. We have ensured that staff are reminded of the appropriate sections to end our duties, so we can better capture this successful preventative work we are achieving. Development of a Power Business Intelligence (BI) Dashboard will allow us to better manage and analyse cases within each duty. The impact of applying our new way of working during the year shows an improvement from stand-alone Quarter 1 performance of 43.16% to 52.73% in the last quarter of the year, this giving a cumulative annual result of 50.5%. Steps we have taken include:
 - Reviewing our first point of contact service and developing a Housing Hwb to provide early homelessness prevention advice and assistance.
 - Analysing who presents to us, from where and why, in order to identify what support we need to provide and what training staff may need to be competent and comfortable with responding to challenging people and cases.
 - Reviewing our practices to ensure resources are in the right place to respond to the increased casework.
 - Reviewing how we utilise the existing legislation and allocations policy to help prevent homelessness as quickly as we can, looking to other councils for best practice.
 - Further develop and automate the Power Business Intelligence Dashboard to enable to team leaders to regularly monitor performance.
 - Continue to monitor and ensure staff utilise the appropriate duty for prevention.

Gap in exam results for pupils receiving Free School Meals and those who do not

- ⊙ The gap between exam results for pupils receiving Free School Meals (FSM) and those who don't (Non-FSM) has reduced by 1.8 percentage points but remains the 7th smallest gap in Wales.
The most recent data available for this measure is 2019/20 (2018/2019 Academic Year)
- ⊙ Free school meal eligibility has increased markedly in Carmarthenshire over the last five years from 16% in academic years 2016/17 to 20% in academic years 2020/21. The largest increase of 3% was seen between 2019/20 and 2020/21. This is 1% above the average for South West and Mid Wales and 1% lower than the Welsh average.

Living in material deprivation

- ⊙ The 2021/22 National Survey for Wales showed that **12%** of participating households in Carmarthenshire were classed as **living in material deprivation***, this is above the Welsh average of 11.3% and an increase on the previous result of 11.3%.
**Material deprivation refers to the inability for individuals or households to afford those consumption goods and activities that are typical in a society at a given point in time, irrespective of people's preferences with respect to these items.*
- ⊙ Five of Carmarthenshire's LSOAs are identified as being in the top 10% most deprived in Wales and rank highly in a number of the domains most closely related to poverty, namely; income, employment, health, education and housing. These areas are; Tyisha 2, Glan-y-môr 4, Bigyn 4, Tyisha 3, Llwynhendy 3.
- ⊙ Since 2011 the number of areas in Carmarthenshire included in the 30% most deprived in Wales has increased by 25% which further corroborates the increasing poverty rates evident in the county.
- ⊙ A more detailed analysis of the 2019 WIMD data for Carmarthenshire can be accessed [here](#).

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

Review of our approach to Tackling Poverty

- ⊙ Work on developing the Council's *tackling poverty plan* has progressed with a number of cross-service sessions held to improve alignment and understanding of support services the Council currently provides. This has led to greater cross-service understanding and collaboration and identification of areas for further development in terms of a holistic Council response whilst also working with a range of external partners.
- ⊙ This will be a key priority for the Council moving forward with further development of cross-service working in order to streamline access to support services and targeting of specific interventions and campaigns based on identified need within the county.

Preventing poverty

- ⊙ We have continued to develop and deliver early intervention support services (0-25) for disadvantaged children, young people and families. Families First (FF) projects have been providing a broad range of support to families/young people in a variety of locations including schools, office/community basis and families' homes as well as continuing to provide support virtually:
 - 6792 individuals supported from the FF programme, of which 4876 (72%) were new individuals.
 - 3569 families supported from the FF programme, of which 2683 (75%) were new families (as a result of working with people on a one-to-one basis)
- ⊙ During the year we have trialled the development of a Hwb Advisor model working through the Council's Customer Service and Contact Centres. We will be looking to further develop and enhance this provision as we aim to work towards providing a holistic support service across all Council services. The Hwb in Ammanford, Carmarthen and Llanelli offer pre-booked appointments and drop-in advice to an average 8,000 residents per month, as well as providing advice and access to training and employment support. For tackling poverty since May 2021 when the staff were appointed, we have helped and advised a total of 528 cases.
- ⊙ The Council's website has been updated to provide a range of information and advice to residents as part of the national [Claim What's Yours](#) campaign. The content aims to make it easier for residents to know what support is available with an option to self-refer for further advice. This will form part of future campaigns to raise awareness of support and advice available.



The Ombudsman published his first ever own initiative investigation into homelessness review processes in Wales [Homelessness Reviewed: An Open door to positive change](#). We were one of three councils in the sample report. The review identified some concerns and examples of good practice.

- ⊙ An action plan response to the Ombudsman's recommendations for improvement has been prepared and will be implemented as part of further development within the service.
- ⊙ The Front of House '*Housing Hwb*' has been implemented and new priorities have been identified around Homeless Prevention as part of the Housing Support Programme Strategy which replaces the Homelessness Strategy.
- ⊙ As an employer we are committed to guaranteeing the equivalent of the 'real living wage' and our lowest paid employees continue to receive the equivalent of the Real Living Wage which is currently £9.90 per hour. We have achieved this via the payment of a supplement – the Real Living Wage Supplement. This means that all employees, regardless of whether they are over the statutory age of 25, are paid at a minimum of the voluntary Real Living wage rate. We also pay supplements for weekend working (8%) and term only working (4%) which increase the pay of mainly lower paid employees. This means that, with the above-mentioned supplements, many of our lower graded posts now attract a total remuneration higher than the Real Living Wage of £9.90 per hour.

Helping people into work

- ⊙ The number of adults receiving support through Communities 4 Work Programmes during 2021/22 is back to pre-COVID figures with over 1,000 adults receiving either employability or digital inclusion support. All (100%) of the participating adults felt more positive with improved confidence about seeking work or more confident in using a computer and gained IT skills.
- ⊙ 271 accredited qualifications were achieved by residents attending Employment related courses within the Communities 4 Work programmes during 2021/22.

Improving the lives of those living in poverty

PRE-TENANCY SUPPORT

- ⊙ For the financial year April 2021/2022, we have **supported 438 new tenants** (helping with **£200k+ supported savings**). This is higher than the previous year due to the Covid restrictions that were in place for 2020/21.
 - Pre-Tenancy Team Staff helped with income maximisation and completing several different benefit applications that financially impacted the tenants.
 - We are trusted partners to apply for grants for white goods, off grid fuel and Emergency Assistance Payments.
 - We issue Foodbank vouchers and make referrals as required for more complex cases.
- ⊙ Pre-Tenancy support has been expanded into the Private Rented Sector (PRS) and we have also supported 103 new tenancies in the PRS, through Housing Support Grant funding. Our PRS Pre-Tenancy Officer now sits in the 3 main Job Centre Offices, taking referrals for anyone making a claim for Universal Credit and have housing costs in the PRS.
- ⊙ We are also in the process of re-starting our Pre-Tenancy training courses now that COVID-19 restrictions are being relaxed. As well as this, we are working in partnership with other teams such as Pre-Tenancy training for foster cares and their placements.

SUPPORTING FAMILIES TO CLAIM ALL THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT THEY ARE ENTITLED TO

- ⊙ Since November 2021 we have administered the winter fuel support scheme and processed 9,480 cases and paid out £3,409,200.
- ⊙ We have paid out £397,584 of discretionary housing payments and up to mid-March received 10,754 self-isolation support payments applications and paid out over £4 million.
- ⊙ We are processing the cost-of-living payments to approximately 63,000 Carmarthenshire households with the value of around £9.5 million to support residents of Carmarthenshire during these challenging times.
- ⊙ Whilst processing claims and dealing with customer enquires housing benefit staff are often able to identify if people need to be referred for more detailed benefit maximisation advice, personal budgeting or debt advice. They will refer individuals for support or signpost to grants and benefits.
- ⊙ We have established a dedicated Transforming Tyisha Team to lead on specific activity to support community and physical development in Tyisha, which is the most deprived Ward in the County.
 - An ambitious masterplan to transform the area will deliver new mixed-use housing developments, develop more community facilities, and bring vacant business premises back into use; improve the environment and tackle crime and anti-social behaviour; and provide opportunities for education, training, and employment.
 - Four flats have been demolished to clear a site for development; expressions of interest have been submitted by prospective development partners; and a feasibility study is being prepared on a potential community hub.



Audit Wales are currently conducting a National Review on 'Are local authorities doing all they can to help tackle and alleviate poverty?'. The report is due to be published in July 2022. We will take stock of the findings and ensure we embed any relevant recommendation into our tackling poverty plan.

Is anyone better off?

Pre-Tenancy Support to JG

- JG was presented to us in March 2021. He had been kicked out by his family due to his antisocial behaviour and his family no longer felt able to cope. JG was subsequently placed into the care of the local authority and at the time of the referral he was neither in Education or Training, therefore being classed as NEET.
- Within three months of presenting as homeless, JG had been referred to Pre-tenancy with the intention of being placed in a training house. The Pre-Tenancy officer accommodated JG's wish not to complete the course as part of a larger group due to his anxiety and it was completed on a one-to-one basis.
- Before allocating JG a place in the training flat, we took the necessary steps to ensure that the current resident met JG prior to moving in. JG then became a resident at the property in August 2021. During his time at the property, JG completed several models of training undertaken with his Youth Support Worker. This training is aimed at providing the necessary skills required to sustain a successful tenancy.
- As a result of early intervention and by providing the right support at the right time, JG has now not only secured employment but is currently successfully maintaining a tenancy out of county. As well as success on a housing level, he also now has a long term and supportive partner.
- The training that was provided by Youth Support Services and support from the Housing Officers has allowed JG to flourish into an amazing young man who is working and living independently

Hwb advisor help to Mrs H

- Mrs H called into a Hwb as she had received a summons for her council tax, as I was talking to her, I could see that there were other financial difficulties there, I offered my service as a Hwb advisor and she agreed.
- She was a single parent of 3 and a homeowner. Her only income was ESA, Industrial injuries, PIP (lower rate) and child benefit, struggling with day-to-day bills and school dinners. She had applied for Free School meals but had been turned down.
- We helped-
 1. Issued with a council tax reduction form and to apply for back dating
 2. Checked council tax and could see there was no SPD in place, husband had left 2 years previous, Issued SPD form
 3. Advised to apply for UC
 4. Advised to appeal PIP and apply for enhanced rate
 5. Advised to apply for a blue badge due to health condition
 6. Phoned FSM who advised to apply again if UC awarded and

Outcome

1. Council tax reduction awarded and backdated 3 months
2. SPD awarded and backdated – refunded £1200
3. Awarded UC
4. Awarded the enhanced PIP
5. Awarded a blue badge
6. FSM awarded

Mrs H was delighted with the help and support that she had received from the Hwb and advised that she was now approximately **£800 a month better off** and not struggling.

Governance Arrangements

To make sure that we are maximising our efforts to tackle poverty we have a cross departmental officer working group and an elected member Advisory Panel.

What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date / Target	Owner / Resp. Officer
A	Reviewing our approach to tackling Poverty		
1	We will implement and update the Tackling Poverty Plan to respond to the current challenges faced by residents and communities (15490)	June 2022	Gwyneth Ayers
B	Preventing Poverty		
1	Review of homelessness and temporary accommodation services (15334)	Sept 2022	Jonathan Morgan
2	Improve the % of household successfully prevented/relieved from becoming homeless (baseline 50.5% in 2021/22)	60%	Angela Bowen
3	Develop Carmarthen Hwb to include partnership working with employability projects and other agencies (15597)	30/06/2023	Eifion Davies
4	Develop and promote the Claim <i>What's yours</i> initiative to support the Council's tackling poverty initiative which is responding to the current challenges faced by residents and communities (15598)	31/03/2023	Deina Hockenhull
C	Helping People into work - Also see Well-being Objective 5		
1	% of adults that feel more positive with improved confidence about seeking work after receiving employability support through Workways, Communities 4 Work and Communities 4 Work Plus Programmes (EconD/020) – 2021/22 Target: 100	100%	Amy Wakefield /Shan Williams
2	% of residents that feel more confident in using a computer and gaining IT skills after receiving digital inclusion support through Workways, Communities 4 Work and Communities 4 Work Plus Programmes (EconD/021) – 2021/22 Target: 100	100%	Amy Wakefield /Shan Williams
3	The number of accredited qualifications achieved by residents attending Employment related courses within the Workways, Communities 4 Work and Communities 4 Work Plus Programmes (EconD/022) – 2021/22 Target: 200	200	Amy Wakefield /Shan Williams
D	Improving the lives of those living in poverty		
1	We will work with partners to deliver a range of support services to support the development and growth of the third sector within the County (15518)	March 2023	Helen Morgan
2	We will continue to maximise the draw-down of funding from external sources via the new funding programmes and support/undertake their delivery, e.g. the £2.9m award from UK Government's Community Renewal Fund (15521)	March 2023	Helen Morgan
3	That the Council works with partners to develop a co-ordinated approach to identifying, supporting and developing volunteering across the County (15522)	March 2023	Helen Morgan



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



Well-being Objective 5 Live Well - Create more jobs and growth throughout the county

Economically things haven't been as bad as we first feared, our interventions have helped but challenges remain

Towards the start of the pandemic, the intelligence gathered at that time clearly demonstrated that we faced an extremely difficult time over the next 24 months as the effects of the COVID-19 crisis put huge pressure on jobs and demand.

As a response to the pandemic and Brexit, in consultation with business, we introduced an [Economic Recovery Plan](#) (ERP) that identified our priority intervention actions for supporting *Business, People and Place* to strengthen the recovery of the Carmarthenshire economy from the social and economic impacts. With this support intervention now in place, Carmarthenshire's economy has generally improved from where we were and can recover as quickly as possible to become one which is more productive than before, more equal, greener, healthier, and with more sustainable communities.

However, some challenges, remain:

! Despite *employment rates improving slightly, we still have the third lowest rate of employment compared to the rest of Wales* *Stats Wales - several industries (most notably the Health & Social Care, Tourism & Hospitality and Haulage sectors) face acute recruitment challenges.*

! *Still have a large and persistent productivity gap with the rest of the UK* *South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan*

! *Demand for our business funds has far outstripped the budgets available to support the private sector* *ERP*

! *Supply chain issues are a severe concern for several sectors, made worse by increasing costs and increased bureaucracy with regards to importing and exporting because of Brexit* *ERP*

! *Evidence suggested that COVID-19 effects were not felt equally by all, with a disproportionate effect by the younger generation & those from low-income households (Kickstart scheme introduced for support)* *ERP*

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- ⊙ Providing secure and well-paid jobs for local people is central to everything we are seeking to achieve.
- ⊙ Increasing employability is fundamental to tackling poverty, reducing inequalities and has a dramatic impact on our health and ability to function in everyday society.
- ⊙ We need to build a knowledge-rich, creative economy by maximising employment and training places for local people through creating jobs and providing high quality apprenticeships, training and work experience opportunities, to have an on-going skilled and competent workforce to face the future



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results



Employment figure

is **69.5%**

(April 21 – March 22)

3rd lowest rate in Wales

(Previously 68.1%)

Source: Stats Wales

According to the annual population survey, as of March 2022 Carmarthenshire continues to have the third lowest rate in respect of employment compared to the rest of Wales. Despite this, employment rates have increased from 68.1% in March 2021 to 69.5% (year ending March 2022). This is again amongst the lowest in Wales and below the national average of 73.6%.



37.7% Qualified to
NVQ Level 4 or above

@ December 2021

(previously 39.9% December 2020)

Source: Stats Wales

For those reaching NVQ Level 4 or above in Carmarthenshire, figures have reduced for the second year running from 41.4% in 2019 to 39.9% in 2020, and 37.7% in 2021. This is below the Welsh average of 41.6% which continues to increase. The number with no qualifications has also increased slightly in 2021 to 7.8% from 6.7% in the previous year.



78.9% Satisfied with their jobs

during 2019/20 (previously 82.5%)

17th highest in Wales (was 11th)

Source: National Survey for Wales

Being happy in work is important for well-being and the latest figures in April 2019 showed that the percentage of people moderately or very satisfied with their jobs was 79% - but this was over 3% lower than both the figure two years previously and the Welsh average. This ranked Carmarthenshire the 17th highest in Wales. A number of factors can affect job satisfaction therefore it is difficult to determine the exact cause of falling rates in the county.



Median Gross Weekly Pay is £566.9 (2021)

(Down from £574.5 in 2020, from 4th highest in Wales to 11th position)

Source: Annual survey of hrs & earnings

The median gross weekly pay of £566.90 for Carmarthenshire is below that of the Wales figure of £570.6. Figures in Carmarthenshire are 11th highest in the whole of Wales, compared to being the 4th highest in 2020.

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

In January 2022 we formally adopted the [South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan](#) as the Council's over-arching economic regeneration policy, that replaced the Swansea Bay City Region Economic Regeneration Strategy (2013). It builds on our distinctive strengths and opportunities to develop a more prosperous and resilient South-West Wales economy (Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot & Swansea). Together with our local Recovery Plan we aim to achieve the vision and objectives contained in the policy.

Our Economic Recovery Plan

Following our assessment in 2020 of the impact that COVID-19 had on Carmarthenshire businesses, and what was important to them in the short, medium and long-term, a business, economy and community recovery group was established to co-ordinate the development and delivery of the themed actions. Together with an overarching advisory group (that also comprised of key private sector industry leaders), an [economic recovery and delivery plan](#) was formally adopted in June 2021 after an independent review.

Key to the plan is ultra-reliable digital connectivity, actions that support the County's foundational economy and supporting local people to grow skills and talent in targeted areas so that there is a strong and resilient local workforce.

Our economy is made up by a large number of self-employed and micro sized enterprises together with significant employment within the [foundational economy](#) (business activities that we use every day and see all around us e.g. retail, care and food industries). So our path to recovery has focused on: Localism - support within our local economies and increased local spend; and Competitiveness - increasing productivity and competitiveness.

With the support/intervention plan, Carmarthenshire's economy has started to recover as quickly as possible to become one which is more productive than before. We are not able to deliver everything, so working across all departments, with public sector partners, external organisations, including the private sector, ensures coordination of activity wherever possible to support our Plan for recovery and growth.

OUR ERP OUTCOMES

Against our 2 Year Targets



Note: Our Economic Recovery Plan has been in place since July 2021, therefore our progress against our targets are over a 9 month period not 12. Our outcomes are attributed to all our service areas across the Authority that contribute towards our economic recovery.

The Recovery Plan sets out our priorities for supporting Business, People and Place:

BUSINESS:

Over 90% of our nearly 8,000 businesses in Carmarthenshire are micro-businesses (i.e. with fewer than 10 employees), so we need to support these businesses to maintain, upscale and grow our economy. We also have more than 10,000 self-employed people who need support to survive and thrive in business. Therefore, safeguarding our existing businesses, supporting new start-ups and growing businesses in our foundational and growth sectors to become more productive and competitive is key.

- Throughout the pandemic we delivered *over £66 million COVID-19 Business Recovery Funds* on behalf of the Welsh Government, which provided a lifeline to businesses in what was a challenging time, enabling the businesses to safeguard jobs. The £66 million was broken down to:

<i>Business Recovery Grants</i>	<i>£586k</i>	<i>Discretionary Grants</i>	<i>£265k</i>	<i>Non-Domestic Rates Business Grants</i>	<i>£65.1m</i>
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- We also supported businesses to *safeguard 717 jobs* via the Carmarthenshire Rural Enterprise Fund and the emergency flood grants (that were set up in response to the adverse weather conditions we experienced in County that directly impacted businesses).

! Demand for our business funds has far outstripped the budgets available to support the private sector across Carmarthenshire. Following a new round of business grant funding totalling £500K for business start-up and growth grants being launched in January 2022 we had to close the opportunity due to the volume of interest, hence there will be a number of applications that will not be able to be funded.

- To help the UK prepare for the introduction of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) (EU replacement funding programme), the UK Government announced a new funding programme, the UK **Community Renewal Fund**. Carmarthenshire was awarded 12 of the 13 shortlisted Community Renewal Fund bids in November 2021 totalling £2.97M.

! Conversely, EU funded services we currently provide will end next year (e.g. Workways+; Community for Work, Short Term Unemployed, Cynnydd, LEADER, etc.), but we have been awarded nearly £37m through the SPF successor funding for activities running up to March 2025.

- Through our Modernising Education and Housing and Highways programmes we awarded contracts to local businesses, providing skilled work opportunities in the local economy and safeguarding jobs.

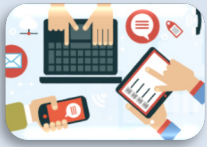
- Six new industrial units in Glanamman were completed by March 2022 as part of a £2.5 million investment. The former empty workshops were transformed and brought back into use in Phase 2, having set aside money from our Five-Year Capital Works Programme in 2017. The new steel workshops are expected to accommodate six small businesses with an additional 15-20 jobs.

- Progressive Procurement: We made significant steps in understanding community wealth building through localising spend to raise awareness of tender opportunities to support local businesses. We launched a business survey to gain an in-depth understanding of the support local businesses require to become 'tender ready' – we will use this information to engage with businesses on a one-to-one basis and provide the support needed.

! *Increasing Capital Costs:* There has been a marked increase in the cost of delivering capital regeneration schemes over the past year. These increases are industry wide and are believed to have been triggered through a number of factors including Brexit, COVID-19 and more recently the conflict in Ukraine. These increases are putting pressure on what is achievable with budgets that were set at project outset. As such, projects are having to be amended where possible to meet these increasing pressures.

- Over 97% of the 342,000 invoices received by the Authority were paid within 30 days, retaining our best ever performance of last year despite a 15% increase in the number of invoices. Prompt payment is essential for businesses especially at a continued time of uncertainty.





Digital Economic Growth The £55 million SBCD Digital Infrastructure programme will benefit residents and businesses in all parts of the Swansea Bay City Region, which includes Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Swansea. The programme is estimated to be worth £318m to the regional economy over the next 15 years.

- ⦿ **The Swansea Bay City Deal Digital Infrastructure Programme:** The Digital Programme Business Case, Board, and Governance of it was established; Access to City Deal funding for the Digital Programme together with additional public sector funding was secured across the region; A central team for the Digital Programme was also established
- ⦿ **Our Digital Regeneration Programme:** There has been significant commercial investment in Gigabit fibre at Cross Hands, Llangennech, Burry Port, Llanelli, and Carmarthen; together with Superfast Cymru 2 investment has been secured to connect 3,300 of Carmarthenshire’s worst served rural premises.
- ⦿ We have trained and supported more than 330 people by improving their digital skills (one of the key areas of targeted intervention), in order they are well equipped with better employment prospects.

PEOPLE:



Regional Learning & Skills Partnership (RLSP) Carmarthenshire is the Lead Body for the Regional Learning & Skill Partnership (RLSP). The RLSP is leading on the delivery of the Swansea Bay City Deal (SBCD) Regional Skills and Talent Programme over the next 5 years. The key aim of the programme is to deliver the skills needs of the 8 City Deal projects and to support the skills needs of the region.

- ⦿ The [Regional Learning and Skills Partnership](#) has worked with employers and training providers to measure and understand the economic and skills impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, culminating in a ‘wrap up’ report being submitted to Welsh Government.



David TC Davies MP meeting students

- ⦿ The *Skills and Talent Programme* for the Swansea Bay City Deal Programme was officially launched in March 2022 when the UK Government Minister for Wales - David TC Davies (MP) met students at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David and Gower College Swansea to hear how it will benefit young people across Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot.

- ⦿ We took the lead on the Young Person’s Guarantee for the region - a Welsh Government initiative to support young people between 16–24 to gain the right skills and experience and support to get into work - working with Careers Wales, Working Wales, Communities for Work and other stakeholders in identifying their needs and delivering the support needed.
- ⦿ Our dedicated employability team have worked with both short term and long-term unemployed individuals in Carmarthenshire to support them into sustainable employment opportunities. During the last year we have collaboratively, with the RLSP, successfully delivered *six job fairs* in each of the primary towns, to support sectors experiencing acute recruitment challenges.



Supporting People at a job's fair

PLACE:

Urban, coastal and rural Carmarthenshire Throughout all the town centres, businesses are supported to make best use of digital communications to grow their market reach, turnover and footfall; with decarbonisation encouraged through low carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure, renewable energy and sustainable developments; and Welsh language and culture supported and promoted to celebrate Carmarthenshire’s identity.



Audit Wales undertook a national review on [Regenerating Town Centres in Wales](#) (September 2021) and concluded that **town centres are at the heart of Welsh life** and can be vibrant and sustainable places, but addressing the many challenges they face requires brave decisions and ambitious leadership. In a digitally dominated world, investing in digital infrastructure and basic skills can play a vital role in revitalising high streets.

We recognised that our **Restart, Revive, Renew recovery strategy, developed in response to the economic impact of COVID-19, provides a good summary of the ‘live’ challenges facing towns in the county.** Our action plan response to the review and existing changes occurring within town centres had already been acknowledged through our recovery plans for our town centres, which have been accelerated by the pandemic, Brexit and other market forces.

- Our Recovery Plans for our three primary towns (Carmarthen, Llanelli and Ammanford) were bespoke to the town and set out the impact that COVID-19 had on the town centres in terms of loss of spending, increased vacancy rates and decline in footfall. In developing the Plans, we worked closely with key members of the towns stakeholders. The Plans highlighted key issues and opportunities and provided a delivery framework of interventions specific to the individual town centres. It is envisaged moving forward these Plans will be owned and delivered by the stakeholders in the respective towns, supported by ourselves by helping to secure funding opportunities and contributing capital funding.
- Alongside the three main town centres, we delivered a programme of investment to support the growth of our 10 rural market towns. Bespoke plans were developed to benefit the town and surrounding areas of Cross Hands, Cwmaman, Kidwelly, Laugharne, Llandeilo, Llandovery, Llanybydder, Newcastle Emlyn, St Clears and Whitland. The development of the growth plans are part funded via the Welsh Government Rural Communities - Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the Welsh Government and the EU.
- In 2021/22 we submitted 2 grant applications under the UK Government’s Levelling Up Fund Programme and were successful in securing funding for the Tywi Valley Path (nearly £17m), and a collaborative bid for the Carmarthen Hwb (nearly £16m) and the Pembroke Hwb (over £4m). The Tywi Valley Path project will provide a continuous shared use path between Llandeilo and Carmarthen.

Carmarthen Hwb: We are progressing at pace with plans to deliver the £18.5m (additional £3.5m match funding from our Capital programme) project at the former Debenhams shop. It is being repurposed into a Hwb centre that will bring together a range of health, well-being, learning and cultural services. Our Customer Service Centre was also relocated to the Hwb.



Browsing at a 100% Sir Gâr Pop Up Shops

- Following the success of our 100% Sir Gâr virtual shop window website platform that promotes over 300 independent businesses from Carmarthenshire, highlighting their products, we launched in August 2021 our 100% Sir Gâr Pop up Shops initiative. This ran for two weeks out of the old Topshop in Carmarthen, followed by a further week in Pembrey Country Park. It was relaunched in December 2021, with a Pop-up Shop in Llanelli and in the old Debenhams, Carmarthen - which generated just under 22,500 visitors to the store, benefiting the wider town centre economy. Most businesses (83%) exceeded their anticipated income targets.

- The establishment of a dedicated Development Management team to focus on ‘Major Projects’ has been instrumental in driving forward the priority focus that deliver jobs and growth in support of the Economic Recovery Plan. Continued progress has been made in addressing the backlog of Planning Applications and moving forward Major Planning Applications. Un-determined Applications (major planning applications & others with job creation) reduced from 133 (July 2021) to 42 at end of year.



Pentre Awel part-funded by the Swansea Bay City Deal - brings together business, research, education, community healthcare and modern leisure facilities all at one prime location along the Llanelli coastline. It is the first development of its scope and size in Wales providing world-class medical research and health care delivery and supporting and encouraging people to lead active & healthy lives.

As well as improving health and well-being, the project will create almost 2,000 jobs (750 to 950 in Zone 1), training/apprenticeship opportunities and is expected to boost the local economy by £467million over the next 15 years.

- Site works underway:** During 2021, Pentre Awel went from strategic planning to implementation and delivery. Site clearance and ground investigation works started on the Delta Lakes site to help progress detailed design and to allow main building works to start on Zone One later this year, with construction scheduled for completion by early 2024.

The project is being developed in phases across Four Zones and we appointed Bouygues UK to design and build Zone One following an extensive tendering process via the South West Wales Regional Contractors Framework - one of the largest ever published by the Authority. The contract has a key focus on social value to ensure that local people and businesses reap the benefits of the ambitious scheme. Work also commenced on procurement of consultants for design of Zone Three.

Rural Economy / Foundational Economy and Community Resilience

The economic and policy context has changed considerably since 2013 at both Welsh and UK level, particularly in light of the UK's decision to leave the European Union, the impact of the pandemic and changes regionally.

- ⦿ The economic effect of the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the need for more affordable homes. As more people work from home and look to leave busy urban areas, the demand for homes in rural and coastal areas has inflated property prices, widening the affordability gap for many local people.



Therefore, in support of this demand we published the [Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan \(December 2021\)](#) that set out our plans to support the delivery of over 2,000 additional homes across the County over the next five years. It also supports economic growth by investing over £300m into our communities and directly supports the actions in our Economic Recovery Plan - supporting businesses, people and places.

The findings of the Rural Affairs Task and Finish Group and the Ten Towns Growth Plans clearly support the need for more housing in rural areas. These plans highlight that affordable homes in rural areas are crucial to help younger and working aged people stay in our rural communities. By helping local people stay, we help preserve the culture of rural towns and villages and protect the Welsh language.

There has been significant improvement on the determination of planning applications and the determination of major projects that has led to several hundred full and part time posts being created over the last 12 months.

Is anyone better off?



Steven Avery is the owner of Craizie Crepes who previously traded from a van on Burry Port Harbour, selling crepes, waffles, milkshakes, hot and cold drinks and much more. As their reputation grew, so did their customer base and as such they wanted a new, larger and more permanent premises from which to operate.

Seeking to maintain their ideal location at Burry Port Harbour, Steven acquired the lease for the former toilet block and after receiving approval for planning, refurbished the building. In 2019 the business was awarded a £10,000 business grant from Carmarthenshire County Council, which supported the business to purchase a number of items such as fridges, freezers, tables, chairs, crepe machines and kitchen equipment to ensure the business operated at maximum efficiency and to maintain the quality of their product range.

However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic their plans to open were delayed but they continued to trade from their mobile unit in between the Government restrictions. During the challenges of the pandemic Steven received support from our COVID-19 helpline where support and advice was offered to the business, and as a result Steven was successful in receiving the Welsh Government Discretionary grants in the various tranches of funding during 2020 - 2022.

Craizie Crepes has since opened the new café and take away facility in their new premises, and the business is going from strength to strength and is a facility that complements Burry Port Harbour as a destination for visitors.

Steven said 'Crazie Crepes Cafe is extremely grateful for the grant received. It enabled us to fulfil our vision for the harbour. Without the grant we would have been struggling to complete the project. It enabled us to buy quality equipment that enables us to do the job to the best of our ability. The Council officer that guided us through the process did an amazing job throughout the process. We are very, very grateful for the time she spent making sure all the paperwork was correct and that all procedures were followed correctly. We currently employ double what we expected to. We now have a thriving business on the harbour with a top reputation for quality food at reasonable prices, exceptional cleanliness and amazing customer service. We are currently busier than we could have imagined and are looking into the possibility of extending the building to cater for the demands. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.'



Governance

A business, economy and community recovery group was established to coordinate development and delivery of actions aligned to our economic recovery and delivery plan (ERP) and an overarching advisory group, comprising key private sector industry leaders, was also established.

Challenges Ahead: Welsh Government have set 50 National Well-being Indicators (NWBI) to measure progress towards the achievement of Well-being goals. These are population based indicators. In December 2021, Ministers agreed to set Milestones on 8 of these indicators, some of which are relevant to this Well-being Objective:

National Well-being Indicator	National Milestone	Current result - Wales	Current result - Carmarthenshire
NWBI-17 - Pay difference for gender, disability and ethnicity	An elimination of the pay gap for gender, disability and ethnicity by 2050	<u>2021</u> Gender Pay Gap - £0.72 <u>2018</u> Disability pay difference - £1.10 Ethnicity pay difference - £0.16	<u>2021</u> Gender Pay Gap - £0.96 <i>Neither Disability or Ethnicity pay difference is currently available at LA level</i>
NWBI-21 - Percentage of people in employment	Eradicate the gap between the employment rate in Wales and the UK by 2050, with a focus on fair work & raising labour market participation of under-represented groups	<u>March 2021</u> Wales - 72.2% UK - 74.7%	<u>March 2021</u> Carms - 68.6% UK - 74.7%

What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective is everything we are doing in our Economic Recovery Plan (ERP)

- ⦿ We will continue to focus on supporting 3,000 people into work, providing 2,000 additional homes, maximising the community benefit of development schemes and supporting businesses to take advantage of key grants
- ⦿ We will for each of the individual town centres, manage the overseeing of the recovery plans passing responsibility to the stakeholders in the respective towns. Each of the plans highlight key issues and opportunities and provide a delivery framework of interventions specific to the town centres
- ⦿ Moving forward the RLSP will continue to work with Employers across the region to ensure that the RLSP inform Welsh Government what skills are required in the region and where WG funding needs to be allocated in order to fulfil the skills demands identified by employers



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



Well-being Objective 6 Live Well - Increase the availability of rented and affordable homes

We have delivered over 1,400 additional affordable homes

Good quality affordable homes are the bedrock of healthy and sustainable communities. We have delivered 1,437 additional affordable homes since 2016 as part of the Affordable Homes Delivery Plan and the new Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- Good quality affordable homes promote health and well-being, meeting the individual needs of the residents, building strong sustainable communities and places where people want to live.
- Good quality energy efficient affordable homes are good for the People and the Environment – our homes are well insulated and have the latest innovative technologies (solar panels and batteries to store energy) that do not only significantly reduce our carbon emissions, they promote affordable warmth for our tenants. The average savings to fuel bills can be as much as 60% per year.
- It is good for the Social Structure - well-placed affordable housing developments allow communities to welcome a wide range of families and to create a vibrant, diverse, group of residents, in both rural and urban areas.
- It is good for the Economy - in order to thrive, new businesses need easy access to its workforce. Affordable housing developments ensure that working families will remain in their community.
- It is good for the Economy – our plans to increase affordable housing will see an investment of over £300m over the next five years in the County. This will help stimulate the local economy, grow the construction industry, the local supply chain and the green economy. This will also create jobs for local people as well as providing more homes to help local people remain in their communities.



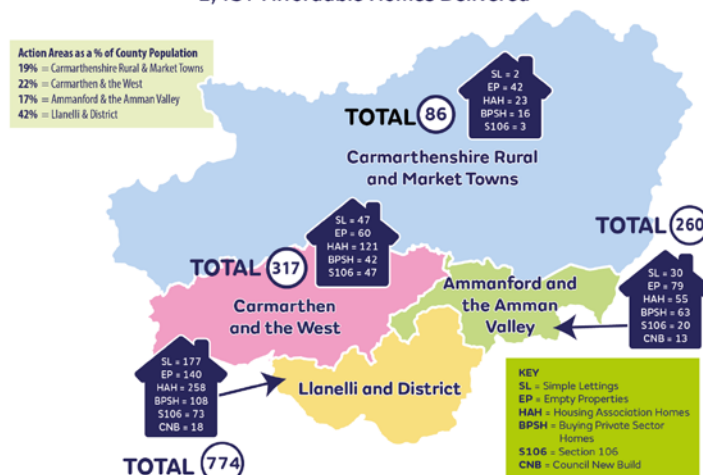
How well are we doing (and how do we know)? Sources of evidence

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

+ 308 Additional Affordable Homes during 2021/22



**Affordable Homes Performance - Overall Performance from April 2016
1,437 Affordable Homes Delivered**



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

Through our Affordable Homes Delivery Plan we aimed to deliver over 1,000 additional affordable homes between 2016 and 2021. We exceeded this target and continue to be committed to delivering more affordable homes through our new Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan. So far, we have delivered **1,437** additional affordable homes through the following solutions:

31: Council New Build Homes

(31: 21/22)

256: Simple lettings agency

(32: 16/17; 63: 17/18; 61: 18/19; 61: 19/20; 30 20/21; 9: 21/22)

321: Empty homes brought back into use

(28: 16/17; 63: 17/18; 67: 18/19; 64: 19/20; 34 20/21; 65: 21/22)

253: Buying private sector homes

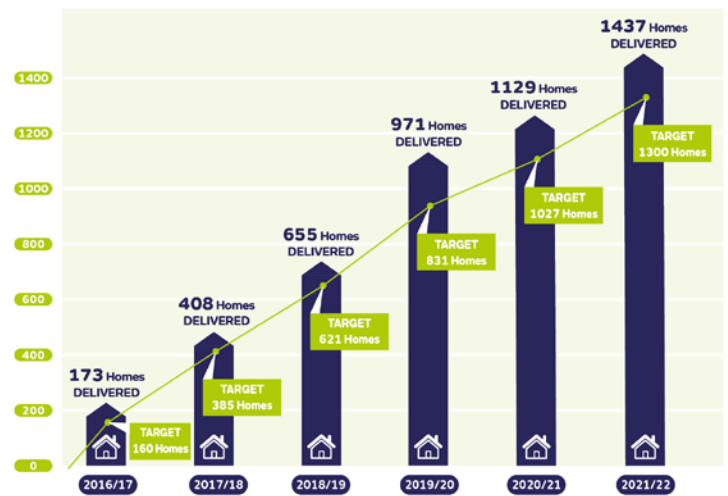
(45: 16/17; 69: 17/18; 81: 18/19; 43: 19/20; 7: 20/21; 8: 21/22)

433: Housing Association new build development

(45: 16/17; 20: 17/18; 17: 18/19; 107: 19/20; 51: 20/21, 193: 21/22)

143: Section 106 Contribution by Developers

(23: 16/17; 20: 17/18; 21: 18/19; 41: 19/20; 36 20/21; 2: 21/22)



In July 2021 we asked the public and our key stakeholders for their views and priorities on how we should deliver more affordable homes in the future. Over **2,500 consultation responses were received** and the key messages from the consultation are summarised below and have shaped our new five-year Housing Regeneration and Development Delivery Plan which was approved in March 2022.

- Housing need should determine where more homes are provided;
- Affordable homes should be provided for families, people with ill-health and disabilities, young people and key workers;
- Homes should be provided on mixed tenure basis;
- Homes in town centres should be provided for town centre workers, single people, couples, young people under 25, people with disabilities and retired people;
- The Council should support rural communities by providing more affordable homes for rent and low cost home ownership, improve transport links, improve digital connectivity and support local businesses; and
- 62% of respondents agreed that building strong communities, promoting the Welsh language and culture should be a priority for the Council.

This plan will build on the success of the Affordable Homes Delivery Plan and aims to support the delivery of 2,000 additional homes throughout the County. This plan will also support economic growth by investing over £300million into our communities directly supporting the action in our Economic Delivery Plan supporting businesses, people and places.

Our new energy efficient affordable homes are well insulated and have the latest innovative technologies and support the Council’s Net Zero Carbon principles. They will reduce our carbon emissions by on average 70% and reduce fuel bills for tenants by up to 60% promoting affordable warmth, growing the green economy and creating sustainable communities.

Our first 3 council new build developments have been completed and let these include: Garreglwyd, Maespiode and Glanamman. We have also completed the first 4 homes on the Dylan Development. These developments have provided 31 new affordable homes for local people. A further 24 sites are either on site, being prepared for planning or tender. This includes 6 sites in rural areas that will be developed on a mixed tenure basis and will provide homes for low-cost home ownership.

- ⦿ We maximise all external funding opportunities that help us deliver more homes in our communities including Social Housing Grant, Integrated Care Fund, Land Release Fund and the Land for Buildings Fund. In 2022 we secured over £19m of external funding to support our development programmes
- ⦿ We have robust governance process in place to ensure we maximise the delivery of affordable homes across the County. This is made up of a number of working groups and sub working groups that report directly to the Housing and Regeneration Strategic Team, CMT Cabinet and Council.


Supporting the delivery of over 2,000 affordable homes in our communities



What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Step....		
1	Delivery of first year of the five-year housing regeneration and development delivery programme (15332)	March 2023	Rachel Davies

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



Well-being Objective 7

Live Well - Help people live healthy lives (tackling risky behaviour and obesity)

Excellent progress has been made in enhancing our health and well-being offer for the residents of Carmarthenshire by developing opportunities to engage online whilst investing in our physical infrastructure to encourage and support people to stay healthy.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- Our way of life is changing, people are living longer with a higher quality of life.
- The challenge is to prevent ill health.
- Living healthy lives allows people to fulfil their potential, meet educational aspirations and play a full part in the economy and society of Carmarthenshire.
- Many of the preventive services and interventions required to maintain health, independence and well-being lie outside health and social care.
- Mental ill health is something that one in four adults will experience in the course of their lifetime.
- Playing a part in providing accessible, inclusive, exciting, sustainable services, which promote and facilitate learning, culture, heritage, information, well-being and leisure.



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results



68.6% of Adults who say their general health

is Good or Very Good
(2021/22)

Previously 69.7% (2020/21)
Source: National Survey for Wales



40.1% of Adults who say they have a

long-term illness (2021/22)
Previously 51.2% (2020/21)
Source: National Survey for Wales



Adult Mental Health score of **48.8**

(Out of a maximum of 70 Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale)
Previously 51.1

Source: National Survey for Wales

92.4%

of Adults who have **two or more** healthy lifestyle behaviours



(2021/22)

Previously 87.6%
(2018/19 & 2019/20)

Source: National Survey for Wales

The following [National Survey for Wales](#) shows:

General Health Good or Very Good

- 68.6% of Carmarthenshire participants said their general health is Good or Very Good, this has reduced slightly from 69.7% in the previous year, but comparatively we have remained in 18th position in Wales. We continue to work with partners such as Public Health via the Public Services Board to promote a healthy environment for Carmarthenshire residents, including exercise, nutrition and cleaner air.

Long-term Illness

- 40.1% of Carmarthenshire participants said they had a longstanding illness, disability or infirmity, this has reduced considerably from the previous survey results which has been around 50%. The Welsh average has also reduced from 45.7% to 33.4%, but comparatively we have moved from 17th to 20th position in Wales. The lower number with a longstanding illness or disability or infirmity the better.

Adult Mental Health

- Our mental health affects how we think, feel and act. Looking after our mental health is as important as our physical health, the link between the two factors of health is becoming increasingly better understood. Poor psychological and emotional well-being can act as a barrier to full participation in society. Issues such as confidence, anxiety, fatigue and stigma can limit an individual's capacity to interact with others or to find work for example.

Data from Public Health Wales is gathered from the National Survey for Wales and analysed according to the [Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale](#). It shows that Mental Well-being in Carmarthenshire has declined from a score of 51.1 (out of a possible score of 60) in 2018/19 to a score of 48.8 in 2021/22. The decline is in line with the rest of the country and is representative of the Welsh average of 48.9.

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale was developed to enable the monitoring of mental wellbeing in the general population and the evaluation of projects, programmes and policies which aim to improve mental wellbeing. It is based on statements about feelings and thoughts, whereby individuals would indicate which best describes their experience of each over the last 2 weeks. Some of the statements include: *I've been feeling useful; I've had energy to spare; I've been thinking clearly; I've been feeling loved etc.*

Two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours

- Based on questions asked in the 2021/22 National Survey for Wales, participants were asked if they have **two or more** healthy lifestyle behaviours which include:
 - not smoking
 - not drinking above weekly guidelines
 - eating five or more portions of fruit and vegetables the previous day
 - being physically active for at least 150 minutes in the previous week
 - maintaining a healthy weight/body mass index

Lifestyle choices impact on our future health and well-being. Carmarthenshire residents compare well to the rest of Wales in some areas such as physical activity, not drinking too much and eating healthily, however, there are a number of lifestyle choices where we compare poorly such as overweight or obese and smoking. 92.4% of participants in Carmarthenshire have two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours this has increase on the previous result of 87.6%, we continue to be below the Welsh average of 92.9%, but we have moved up from 18th to 13th best in Wales.

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

Eat and breathe healthily

- An Air Quality Delivery Plan has been developed and adopted by the AQ Action Steering Group. Local authorities are responsible to declare Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) if national air quality objectives are not likely to be met. In Carmarthenshire there are three active AQMAs

AQMA Name	Pollutants
Llandeilo AQMA	Nitrogen dioxide NO ₂
Llanelli AQMA	Nitrogen dioxide NO ₂
Carmarthen AQMA	Nitrogen dioxide NO ₂

- Investment at Pembrey Country Park includes a new playground, an expansion of the cycling pump track, new mobile catering units, glamping pods, and enhancements to paths and eating areas at our camping and caravan site.

- ⦿ Mynydd Mawr Woodland Park has also recently secured close to £86k of external funding investment to enhance walkways, and bio-diversity at that site.
- ⦿ We have invested over £200k of internal and external funding at Llyn Llech Owain Country Park including a new toddlers play area, improved walks, and interpretation.



Physical Activity

- ⦿ We successfully hosted the 2021 Men's Tour of Britain professional cycle race in September 2021, as part of our wider commitment to developing sporting events and activities across the County to inspire future generations to lead healthy, active lifestyles
- ⦿ Llandovery Leisure Centre site masterplan completed, with creation of new fitness and multi-purpose rooms to complement the existing 20m pool. Outdoor multi-use courts also being incorporated into the community offer, working closely with Ysgol Gynradd Rhys Pritchard.
- ⦿ We have secured £2m of internal and external funding, £1.7m CCC capital funding /£300k external grant funding to develop the next phase of the Amman Valley Leisure Centre site masterplan. This will provide a state of the art full size, floodlit school and community use 3rd Generation all-weather artificial turf pitch and enhanced athletics facilities for school, public and club users.
- ⦿ Work is ongoing with the development of our Actif Anywhere online platform to stream classes and activities to people's homes; community halls; care homes; surgeries; hospital physio support (linking with the National Exercise Referral Scheme); and schools (pilot of 18 schools completed with potential to roll this out across Wales as a paid for extra-curricular service, with our USP being bi-lingual delivery).
- ⦿ We have appointed a main contractor to develop the new Leisure Centre in Llanelli as part of the Pentre Awel development.

Mental Health

- ⦿ Carmarthenshire Libraries have introduced new digital, technological and creative "Maker" services at key Library points, where users and communities are encouraged and supported to participate in an increasingly digital world. As part of our libraries core offer, maker services promote hands-on learning, creativity and collaboration, where people of all backgrounds and abilities can come together to share ideas and equipment that inspires confidence and helps users acquire new skills, building and igniting individual ambitions and encouraging learning for life.
- ⦿ The council has invested significant growth resource to address this which will be used to recruit more social work and social care staff to focus on two specific areas: early intervention and prevention, and a more robust and timely crisis response.
- ⦿ We have been collaborating with the Health Board and the third sector to develop initiatives in this regard developing a Single Point of Access and a 24/7 crisis response service.
- ⦿ The Twilight sanctuary crisis response in Llanelli, which was council led, goes from strength to strength and the model is now being rolled out across the region.
- ⦿ We are embarking on an ambitious programme of change in relation to accommodation. Our vision is to reduce the reliance on residential care and develop more community options accommodation, which promote choice and independence



Substance Misuse

- ⦿ We have been working with colleagues in the health board ,and third sector to improve access and intervention for those who have substance misuse and mental health issues ,and also for those who have alcohol related brain damage .
- ⦿ The Fulfilled Lives Scheme has been a successful pilot which supports people with Alcohol Related Brain Damage to remain living independently within the community

Is anyone better off?

ACTIF RESTART – WINTER OF WELL-BEING GRANT



The aim of the Actif Restart project was to improve the overall health and well-being of identified NEET (not in education, employment or training) population as they are supported through a journey to prepare for integration into their community through sport either as participants or voluntary/paid roles.

Throughout the project opportunities were provided to the participants to further enhance transferable job-based skills and qualities such as confidence, communication and leadership which can be taken forward with them in their futures.

Project Participants benefited from the following:

Actif Adult workshops	Tag leaders award
Coaching experience at rugby festivals	Coaching development opportunities
Club integrations	CV and interview preparation
Paid employment opportunities within Actif	Links to apprenticeships and further education
Opportunities to reflect on the project both individually and as a group	

The need for the project was identified after consulting with local organisations with a heavy focus to prepare young people for future careers or further education that were currently not in Education or Employment. Further discussions then took place with Dyfed Powys Intact project and CCC departments such as Youth Services and Employment Support. The data below highlights how important links with the listed partners are to provide young people with positive role models and support groups to help reduce the risk of crime in the local area. By introducing participants into social and safe environments within sports teams and encouraging ongoing involvement with clubs after the project the aim is to help reduce the risk of the individuals becoming involved with any criminal activity.

Through individual consultations with participants, it was possible to identify suitable sports clubs to signpost them to as a player or volunteer. Introductions into sports teams created a sense of affiliation and belonging for the Actif Restart participants within their chosen teams, providing them with a positive surrounding and reinforcing rules and disciplines to follow whilst at training and playing games. For this target group, embracing principles of sportsmanship, teamwork, and interactions with peers were all incredibly valuable aspects of the project for the participants to develop important life skills and help strengthen self-belief. Having positive experiences within these sports clubs has now allowed participants to increase their physical activity levels and encouraged them to restart or continue their physical literacy journey.

What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
#			
1	We will work to reduce waste and our carbon footprint across our Leisure and Cultural services, whilst increasing opportunities to lead healthy, fulfilled lives (16119)	31/3/23	Ian Jones
2	Development of a 10-year future direction document for discussion, input, and endorsement by the new political administration for the County in early 2022/23 (16120)	1/9/23	Ian Jones
A	Eat and breathe healthily		
1	Air Quality action plan progress and matters arising will be reported through the Net Zero Carbon plan report (16131)	31/3/23	Rhodri Griffiths
B	Physical Activity		
1	We will implement a Cycling Strategy for Carmarthenshire that will focus on 5 key strategic themes: Education, Development and Training; Infrastructure and Facilities; Marketing & Branding; Tourism Events (13195)	31/03/23	Carl Daniels
2	We will develop Ammanford Leisure Centre facilities with upgrades to internal wet-side changing facilities (phase 1 - completed); and improvements to parking infrastructure and external sports facilities linked to wider school site masterplan (phase 2) (14705)	30/03/23	Carl Daniels
3	We will need to work towards regaining and exceeding membership and income to pre-covid levels - with the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic changing lifestyles and habits, this will be the services' greatest challenge (16121)	31/3/23	Ian Jones
C	Mental Health		
1	Implement Service delivery changes in Mental Health as part of the transforming Mental Health Agenda (16122)	March 22	Avril Bracey
D	Substance Misuse		
1	See Mental Health action	March 22	Avril Bracey



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

Age Well

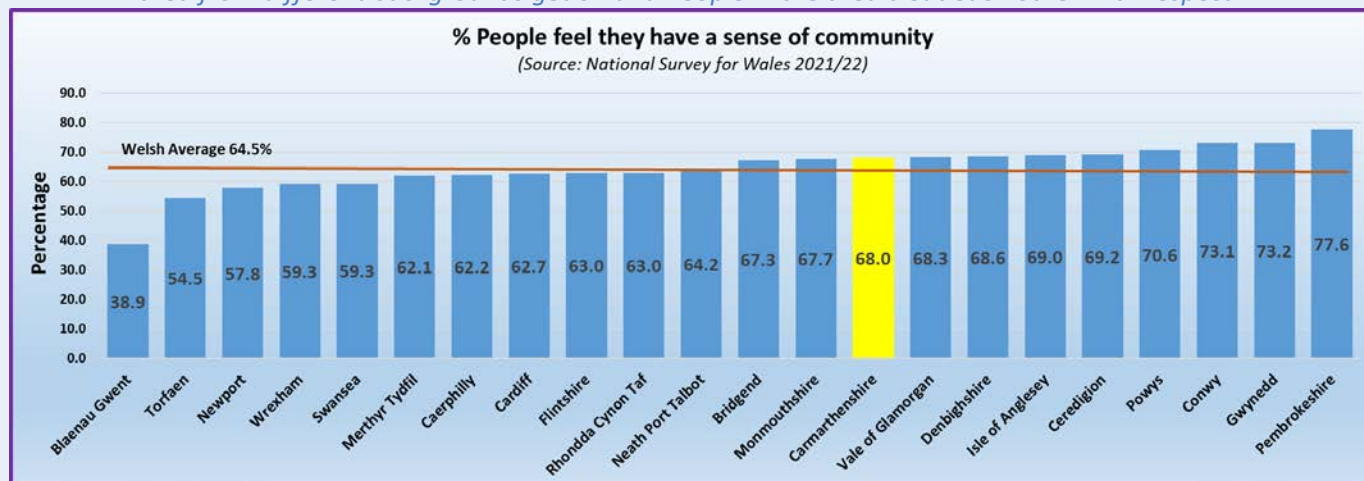




Well-being Objective 8 Live Well/Age Well - Support good connections with friends, family and safer communities

Sense of Community survey results have reduced slightly in Carmarthenshire from 68.6% to 68.0%

The 'Sense of Community' is derived from three questions; *People feel they belong to their local area; People in the area from different backgrounds get on and People in the area treat each other with respect*.



Despite a reduced result we move up from 13th to 9th position in Wales.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- ⊙ Safety and a feeling of belonging are important to personal well-being and more people now appreciate the value of kindness and being part of a community.
- ⊙ A cohesive community is an area where those from different backgrounds share positive relationships, feel safe in their neighbourhood, and have a sense of mutual respect and shared values.
- ⊙ **Community Resilience** is also essential to enable communities to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations. The COVID-19 crisis has shown what can be achieved when communities work together.



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

68.0% People who feel they have a sense of community (9th Highest in Wales)
Previously 68.6% (13th)
Source: National Survey for Wales



66.7% People feel safe
Previously 74.6%
11th Highest in Wales



Source: National Survey for Wales

A sense of community

- ⊙ According to the 2021/22 [National Survey for Wales](#), 68.0% of participants felt they had a 'Sense of Community', this is a slight reduction on previous result of 68.6%. This result was derived from three questions: People feel they belong to their local area; People in the area from different backgrounds get on and People in the area treat each other with respect. Despite the slight decline, when compared with other results in Wales, we have moved up from 13th to 9th position.
- ⊙ Recent consultation in 2020 (as part of Carmarthenshire's [Well-being Assessment](#)) with representatives from a number of sectors of the community showed overall positive opinions towards current

community cohesion in Mid and South-West Wales. Focus groups were held with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities; EU (non-Welsh) citizens, rural and isolated communities, first language Welsh speakers, Gypsy / Traveller Communities, Syrian Refugees, LGBTQ+ people, disabled people and/or people with health conditions and young people. **77% of the interviewees referred to community cohesion as good.** It was recognised that there was potential for improvement and perceived “tensions” or “problems”.

Feeling Safe

- ⊙ According to the 2021/22 [National Survey for Wales](#), the number of **participants feeling safe has reduced from 74.6% to 66.7%**, but keeping just above the Welsh average of 66%. Comparatively, we have moved from 6th to 11th place. This result was derived from three questions: *people feeling safe at home; walking in the local area; and when travelling in the dark.*
- ⊙ As part of Carmarthenshire’s Well-being Assessment consultation work, our Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic residents were equally concerned with threats of extremism, prejudice and hate crime. **In terms of community cohesion, our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community noted concern regarding community resources being closed, prejudice and lack of investment in their local community.** Raising concern about unfair treatment and reporting a hate crime were the top two things that Carmarthenshire residents would consider doing to help make things fairer for everyone in their community when asked as part of the 2021 Well-being Survey.

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

Develop and implement how we provide information, advice, and assistance.

- ⊙ We continue to work in partnership with Delta Well-being as our Single Point of Access into community health and social care. Through the expertise of the Information, Advice and Assistance team, wherever possible, we support people with information and advice without the need for referral to formal ongoing assessment. In 2021/22, on average 25% of contacts were resolved at information and advice without the need for further statutory support.
- ⊙ We have strengthened the role of Delta Well-being in our hospitals, and now have Well-being Officers working on the wards who act as the link between health and social care to aid timely discharge from hospital.

Greater community cohesion

- ! In 2019, the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee undertook a **Task and Finish Review of Loneliness**, which put forward recommendations for the Council to consider. In light of these recommendations, plans are in progress to appoint a Senior Manager for Prevention and also a cross population Prevention Strategy and Action Plan. A key pillar of this plan will be Loneliness and addressing any gaps that are identified to help the wider population feel more socially included.
- ⊙ The regional dementia strategy is now in its final draft and waiting official sign off from the regional partners. The regional Dementia Steering Group is meeting regularly and progressing all aspects of the dementia funding workstreams. A regional Dementia Strategy Coordinator is currently being recruited to and will be in post shortly. We are working towards the re-opening of day services to include dementia clients.
- ⊙ The relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions has led to a surge in enquiries from a wide range of event organisers – community organisations seeking to re-establish annual events cancelled due to the Pandemic as well as more commercial ones seeking to create new brands or those seeking to start the building up again of former events.

Impact of COVID-19 on the mental health and well-being of our population and community resilience

- ⊙ A feasibility study is being undertaken within Tyisha for the establishment of a Community Hub. Based on the feasibility study a business plan will be developed. Asset Based Community Development Training has been planned for residents, officers, and local groups. A great deal of community based activities have taken place throughout the year to develop positive community relationships such as litter picking, play events and sessions, creative play sessions for parents and gardening projects.

- ⊙ Summer of Fun and Winter of Well-being initiatives have been successfully delivered via funding from Welsh Government to key wards across the County. Targeted initiatives were delivered in partnership with agencies like the Police and Crime Commissioner, CYCA, Inspire Recruitment and the Scarlets to re-engage Children and Young People back into physical activity. The funding was a catalyst to create new initiatives and partnerships which will form part of our service moving forward.
- ⊙ Over 60s in Carmarthenshire were given more options to enjoy exercise as the country recovers from the pandemic, as part of a £1m investment by Welsh Government. In a drive to reduce health inequalities and social isolation as part of Welsh Government's Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales Action Plan 2020-22, the funding allocated to Sport Wales was shared among all 22 local authorities for use on projects. Adults aged 60+ were able to access free and discounted sport and physical activity sessions in facilities and the community
- ⊙ As part of a Sport Wales Rescue Package numerous workshops and webinars were held with community clubs across the County to support club recovery and development plans, linked to Covid recovery. Actif Communities Officers supported clubs with recruiting and training volunteers, expanding their age groups, risk assessments and return to play protocols as well as supported funding bids.
- ⊙ Actif Carmarthenshire's Sports Awards Sports are one of the most prestigious Awards ceremonies in the county, recognising and celebrating sports successes and contributions throughout the year. In the absence of a ceremony in 2021 because of the Pandemic, January 2022 was an opportunity to reflect on the last 2 years and despite the pandemic, celebrate huge achievements from individual athletes to teams. Nominations were received from Sports Clubs, individuals and local Councillors, for awards for participation such as Sportsman of the Year and Young Sports Woman, as well as awards for those that the sport cannot function without such as Volunteer of the Year and Coach of the Year.

Support Safer Communities

- ⊙ The pandemic has provided opportunities for criminals to exploit persons who may be more exposed to fraudulent approaches due to lockdown/shielding and isolation from support networks. There has again been an overall rise in the numbers of frauds reported nationally with the Office of National Statistics reporting that there were 5 million fraud offences in the year ending June 2021, a 32% increase compared with the year ending June 2019. trueCall© Nuisance Call Blocking Devices, which have been installed in elderly and vulnerable residents' homes in the county have for the year 2021/22 blocked 15,831 nuisance calls. Based on national intelligence 4,340 of those calls were identified as being from numbers used by known criminals.
- ⊙ The innovative alert system Seraphimbeta© developed in the wake of the pandemic to notify authority officers when a trueCall user was experiencing high volume of calls from suspected fraudsters has for the year 2021/22 generated 94 high level alerts (an increase of 28 from the previous year). These alerts have led to welfare calls and officer intervention to prevent vulnerable residents engaging in telephone fraud approaches. Funding secured to increase the existing fleet of 220 call blockers has been used to purchase a further 500 call blockers and these are currently being deployed with authority partners Delta Well-being. Based on current average nuisance call volumes, we predict our combined fleet of call blockers has the potential to block in the region of 83,000 nuisance calls in Carmarthenshire annually. This work is being led by Trading Standards.
- ⊙ During Hate Crime Awareness Week, the Community Cohesion team helped coordinate a regional calendar of events, capturing content from partners who include Victim Support, Dyfed Powys Police, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Hywel Dda University Health Board and Race Council Cymru. The cohesion team led on a number of projects during that week and throughout the year including:
 - A project in collaboration with Victim Support and youth clubs for young people to design a T-shirt, focusing on diversity and inclusion.
 - An Online Hate Crime Workshop tackling the issues around hate crime and social media.
 - A series of online Hate Crime Awareness events, in collaboration with Victim Support
 - Promoting the Community Cohesion Hate Crime Awareness film

The team led on a number of training opportunities for professionals including a series of sessions focusing on Awareness and Counter Narrative on Right Wing activity and Incel.

- ⦿ The Community Cohesion team ran a Small Grants fund across the region to encourage community groups and organisations to apply for funding. A number of successful projects ran across Carmarthenshire including:
 - *Queering Wales. Representation as a means to inclusion - On your face collective:* On your face is a LGBTQ+ platform aiming to bring the queer creatives of Wales to the forefront. The Cohesion team funded an event at The Nurture Centre in Carmarthen and will include an exhibition by various artists from the collective, live music, workshops, talks, open mic and a food stall. The exhibition would last up to 3 weeks but the event would be from 10 to 8 on the opening day.
 - *Future Proof, the Well Together Community - Create Me Happy / Rivki Rose Training:* The project combines two online workshops for Carers, to improve individual and community resilience through Self-advocacy Community Champions / Active Citizenship. The workshops were delivered to commemorate Carers Rights Day and International Day of Disabled people.
 - *Spoken Word Saturday, Community Connectivity Events - People Speak Up:* The project consisted of 5 bilingual spoken word face-to-face/digital community connectivity events at Y Ffwrnes Fach (Old Zion Chapel) in Llanelli. Events were an opportunity for the community to share their own stories and personal experiences of oppression, disconnection, loneliness, and post COVID-19 reactions. The events also had open community conversation times which will be an opportunity for individuals to chat, share, listen over cake and tea. The first event saw storyteller Phil Okwedy share his story of Nigerian descent, being brought up in a children's home, and how it feels to be a black man living in Wales.

Is anyone better off?

WINNER OF THE YOUNG SPORTS VOLUNTEER

Keeping team training together again safely

Joshua Edwards won the Young Sports Volunteer award for his role within Carmarthen Town AFC. Joshua has been a key part of the club for many years. When Josh was 16 years of age, he started a walking football group for over 50s in the area creating more opportunity for people to get involved.

Throughout the pandemic Josh has ensured all risk assessments and procedures were in place for the team to continue training with confidence and become socially active again, safely. Josh has also taken the role of Wales development squad manager and coach for age group males.'



What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Develop and implement how we provide information, advice, and assistance		
1	Implement the requirements of the new Liberty Protection Safeguards in line with legislation (16124)	March 2022	Avril Bracey
2	We will ensure we respond to adult safeguarding concerns in accordance with the SSWBA (Part 7) and evolving statutory guidance (16125)	March 2023	Avril Bracey
3	We will develop a formal agreement between the Local Authority and Health Board, outlining collective responsibilities whilst agreeing a new staffing structure in Integrated Services to support our approach to develop strong communities, help people help themselves and provide support when it is needed. (15101)	Dec 2022	Alex Williams
B	Greater Community Cohesion		
1	Publish a cross population Prevention Strategy and Action Plan, a key pillar of which will address loneliness (15342)	March 2023	Alex Williams
2	We shall continue to develop a more strategic approach to strengthen and develop the preventative network of services & build community resilience, especially in relation to the third sector, housing related support and the wider community, including carers. (15083)	March 2023	Alison Watkins
C	Mental Health and Resilience		
1	See Well Being Objective 7 Action C1	NA	NA
D	Safer Communities		
1	To ensure the Council fully considers and responds to the requirements of the Counter Terrorism Protect Duty once published (expected in 2022-23) (15495)	March 2023	Kate Harrop
2	We will ensure the Council fulfils its duties relating to the current Contest Strategy (counter terrorism) and respond to any duties as they arise (15494)	March 2023	Gwyneth Ayers



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



Well-being Objective 9

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

We have continued to keep older people safe in our communities in the most challenging of times, during which, as experienced nationally, demand for social care by far outweighs the limited care and support available in our communities. Ensuring that we target support where it is most needed has allowed us to help people to age well whilst maintaining their dignity and independence. As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, the key challenge has been how to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of skilled and experienced social care workers to provide the support that our communities need. Efforts to do this has become our primary focus and top priority for our integrated health and social organisations.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- ⊙ Carmarthenshire has a high proportion of residents over 65 years old who are a vital and vibrant part of the community. We want the county to be a place to age well.
- ⊙ Consultations have demonstrated that ‘what matters’ to older people is to be able to be as independent and as well as possible for as long as possible.
‘Being respected as an older person and not being seen as a burden on the local health and social care system’
- ⊙ Research shows that a vital factor of healthy ageing for older people is social participation, respect and inclusion.
- ⊙ Older people contribute to the economy in Carmarthenshire by caring for their grandchildren or other family members.
- ⊙ Wider services can make an important contribution in supporting and sustaining the independence of older people and reducing the demand on Social Services and Health Care.
- ⊙ The Council has determined to make Carmarthenshire a dementia friendly County along the lines of the [Alzheimer's Society Dementia Friendly Community Programme](#).
- ⊙ The impact of COVID-19 on our care homes.



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results



66%

Agree there's a good social care service available in their area

(Previously 47.5%)

Source: National Survey for Wales



It takes us an average of

259

calendar days to deliver a

Disabled Facilities Grant

(Previously 347 days)

15.4% of people feel lonely in Carmarthenshire



(Previously 17.3%)

Source: National Survey for Wales

Good Social Care Service available in the area

- ⊙ According to the 2020/21 [National Survey for Wales](#) **66%** of participants believed that there is **good Social Care Service available in the area**. This is an improvement on the last survey result of 47.5% and above the Welsh average of 63.9%.

Disabled Facilities Grant

- ⊙ Delivering Disabled Facilities Grant adaptations during the last couple of years has been challenging due to COVID-19 restrictions with delays and the ability to complete ongoing site work. Our average number of days to complete these adaptations pre COVID-19 was 176 days, and well below the Welsh average

of 204 days. This greatly increased during 2020/21 to 347 days and above the Welsh average of 261 days. This disruption created a backlog with a continued high number of days during 2021/22, but as the backlog is being addressed during the year, the average number of days has improved significantly to 259 days.

Feeling Lonely

- According to the 2021/22 [National Survey for Wales](#), **15.4%** of participating adults in Carmarthenshire **classed themselves as lonely**, this has reduced from the previous result of 17.3% but continues to be above the Welsh average of 12.8%, and comparatively we have moved from 19th to 18th position in Wales.

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


Improved population health and well-being

- Our Theatrau Sir Gâr service delivered a live stream of a Christmas Show to 6 care homes
- Actif received £46k from Welsh Government to promote and deliver free and discounted physical activities to the 60+ population. These included a range of Walking Sports (rugby, football and netball), Nordic Walking, Paddleboarding, Curling, fitness classes, gym activities and racket sports.
- Actif Adult Officers in the Actif Communities team have worked in partnership with clubs and organisations to facilitate and establish a number of walking sport sessions and clubs across the County.
- Our Delta Connect service has gone from strength to strength over the last 12 months. Over 3,000 individuals have now registered for the service in Carmarthenshire, and the rapid response element of the service where a registered team of carers can provide emergency support has proved vital to keeping people safe and well at home. The service has responded to individuals almost 6,000 times and has often negated the need for a hospital admission or an emergency placement in a care home. The reassurance that Delta Connect is available at the end of a phone provides for Carmarthenshire residents and their families makes a huge contribution to improved population health and wellbeing.
- Thankfully, the impact on Older People of the pandemic has started to lessen over the last 12 months. The success of the vaccination programme has meant that COVID-19 is now more routine to manage in care settings, and risk of serious illness or death has decreased to levels comparable with other more routine seasonal illnesses such as flu. The impact psychologically cannot however be underestimated, and many older people have become increasingly isolated and are still living in fear of the risk of COVID-19. Initiatives such as Delta Connect are therefore vital to help support emotional health and well-being.



Better quality and more accessible health and social care services

- There is a national shortage of both qualified social workers and skilled and experienced care staff. At the same time, we have seen the impact that lockdowns linked to the pandemic and difficulties in accessing routine services have had on increasing the health and social care needs of our older population. The combination of these two factors has created a perfect storm. There are consequently an increased number of older people requiring social work assessment and consequently care at home, whilst there are less social workers available to carry out those assessments and less care hours available to support people in the community.


 <p>Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru Care Inspectorate Wales</p>	<p>Summary ‘People and their relatives speak highly about the care and support they receive. Care records are person centred and reflect people’s individual needs. Care staff are well trained, have a good knowledge of the people they care for and are enthusiastic about working in the service. Dedicated and knowledgeable managers who are well supported by the Responsible Individual (RI) lead the service. The managers are accessible and well respected by all involved. The RI has good oversight of the service and there are robust systems in place</p>
<p>May 2022</p>	

Carmarthenshire County Council In-house domiciliary care service Inspection Report	to support this. The leadership team have good working relationships and a clear vision about the service’
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- ⊙ We are doing all we can to prioritise those in most need of assessment and those that are waiting for care. However, it does mean that we have waiting lists for both assessments and care and consequently people are having to wait longer than we would like to get the support that we need.
- ⊙ In light of the above, we have had to be as creative as we can in finding alternative ways to support people. This has led to us rethinking the way in which we work and the success of one such initiative, the Intermediate Care Multi-Disciplinary Team (IC MDT), has been recognised as a finalist in the IESE Public Sector Transformation Awards 2022. The team adopts a ‘Home First’ principle to support people to leave hospital sooner or help keep people at home, by providing short-term support health to help people return or remain at home as independently as possible.



Higher value health and social care

	<p>In November 2021, Care Inspectorate Wales published its Assurance Check 2021 letter on Carmarthenshire County Council.</p> <p>Adult Social Care Assurances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative working • Good communication and support across organisation • Shared vision of addressing the needs of people • People (including carers) given the opportunity to tailor and manage their own support • A positive integrated approach to a culture of prevention • Makes a positive contribution to the well-being of people in the pandemic period <p>Adult Social Care Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider Market • The demand pressure in the system is greater than the capacity available • Fragile position for in-house service • Delivery of care and support in some geographical areas
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- ⊙ In context of the workforce challenges, making best use of our resources has never been more critical. This year we have gone out to tender for our new Care and Support at Home Framework which, notwithstanding the recruitment and retention challenges, will allow us to provide a more equitable service across the County.

Internal Audit 	Internal Audit has undertaken a recent review of the grant: ENABLE – Support for Independent Living	Internal Audit concluded that the project’s aims and objectives had been met and that grant expenditure had been properly incurred in accordance with the grant offer.
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- ⊙ In addition, we have used creative means such as the Well-being Support Grant, to financially recompense carers and families to support their loved ones whilst they are waiting for long-term care arrangements to be put in place.

A motivated and sustainable health and social care workforce

- ⊙ The growing number of qualified social work and care worker vacancies, combined with increase in demand and people presenting with much more complex issues to resolve has seen waiting lists growing to much higher levels than we would like. Our primary focus has therefore been to develop

and implement our Social Care Recruitment and Retention Plan to give us every chance possible to recruit and retain staff to the level that we need.

- ⦿ Over the course of the last 12 months, we have carried out comprehensive recruitment campaigns both internally and in support of the wider sector.
- ⦿ We have also offered our social care staff a variety of retention payments to encourage them to continue to work for Carmarthenshire.
- ⦿ We are developing career progression routes for staff so that they can develop their careers with us enabling us to succession plan for the future.
- ⦿ We are in the process of launching our Care Academi which will provide career opportunities for those wishing to go into care to pursue professional routes such as social work.
- ⦿ There is still much work to do, but we were starting to see a slightly improved position particularly in relation to social work vacancies.



Carmarthenshire's Delta CONNECT offers "a lifeline" to Edward during pandemic lockdown

When 82-year-old widower *Edward returned to his Llandovery home from a long spell in hospital at the end of 2019, his son, daughter in law and daughter would visit several times a day to help support him in his everyday life and keep an eye on him.

However, everything changed when the lockdown started. Edward began shielding and frequent visits were no longer as easy.

Edward began using the Delta CONNECT service in March 2020 and it has meant the world to him. His mood was extremely low after his lengthy stay in hospital and he had lost a lot of weight, which left him feeling frail and vulnerable.

As part of the CONNECT service, his assigned Community Wellbeing Officer (CWO) Louise called him weekly to check how he was and whether he needed any help. He also had a Lifeline home unit with pendant to call for help in an emergency.

"I'd been in hospital for four months and was really down in the dumps." Edward said, "It really helped when I spoke to Louise. She brought me back from the depths of despair."

For many clients, the service includes food or medical supplies, but Edward was lucky enough to have his family living locally to help with this.

"I'm so lucky to have a fantastic family nearby and they really look after me, but sometimes it's easier to talk to someone outside of your family because you don't want them to worry any more that they already are."

"I can't speak highly enough of CONNECT. Knowing that there was someone at the end of the phone for me was a lifeline and so reassuring for my family as well."

The CWOs are trained to identify clients who may need additional support, even when the client hasn't recognised that need themselves - this has helped Edward's family know that he is safe and supported at home even when they can't be there

Edward's son *Jonathan said: "The Delta service means a lot to my dad and he feels genuinely privileged to be able to access it. The Lifeline system is invaluable for him and although we're close by, it's reassuring for the family to know that help is on hand should he need it.

"The wellbeing calls have been fantastic - he enjoys having someone different to talk to and really looks forward to the calls every week. In a few years I'll probably be signing myself up."

***Names have been anonymised**



Proud to be working in partnership with:



What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Improved population health and well-being		
1	We will provide proactive and planned care to people in the community with chronic long-term health conditions/ increased frailty and those that require support at the end of their life (16132)	March 2023	Alex Williams
2	We will develop and implement a Prevention Strategy for Carmarthenshire which will include continuing to work in partnership with Delta Wellbeing in support of our residents (15342?)	March 2023	Rhian Dawson
3	We will continue to reshape our approach to support patient flow and home first by developing the discharge to assess pathways and ensure that monitoring and escalation processes are maintained to ensure effective flow across the Carmarthenshire system (15348)	March 2023	Alex Williams/ Rhian Dawson
B	A motivated and sustainable health and social care workforce		
1	We will grow the professional Social Work and Occupational Therapy workforce by ensuring that Carmarthenshire is an attractive place to work, there are opportunities for career progression and development of career pathways for non-qualified staff to become qualified (16133)	March 2023	Alex Williams



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

Healthy, Safe & Prosperous Environment

A large, diverse crowd of people is shown from a low angle, looking towards the camera. The people are mostly wearing light-colored clothing, and the scene is brightly lit, suggesting an outdoor event. The text 'Healthy, Safe & Prosperous Environment' is overlaid in the top left corner in a white, sans-serif font.



Well-being Objective 10 Healthy & Safe Environment - Look after the environment now and in the future

We have significant Environmental challenges to address

- ! A big challenge will be delivering against the decarbonisation priorities. We'll need to significantly increase future carbon savings to meet the Council's commitment to become a Net Zero Carbon (NZC) local authority by 2030.
- Our Planning Service had significant and long-standing performance issues and an external audit brought this to the fore and in year the Council has intervened and made significant progress.
- ! Maximising recycling has been difficult following a fire at our main materials recovery facility and with COVID-19 relaxation of black bag rules. We have a new recycling contamination action plan and a new waste strategy which will help us deliver improved performance.
- Compared to previous years, 2021/22 has not seen as many significant flooding events resulting in high numbers of Carmarthenshire businesses and residents affected by internal flooding.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- ⊙ A biodiverse natural environment is good for well-being, with healthy functioning ecosystems, supporting social, economic and ecological resilience.
- ⊙ A good planning service is essential to deliver the Council's ambitions.
- ⊙ We have declared a climate emergency as a Council and were the first in Wales to have published our [Route Towards becoming a Net Zero Carbon Local Authority by 2030](#).



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results



We generated
1,059,364 kWh of
renewable energy
during 2020/21
(increased from 997,480 kWh in
the previous year)



The Council's Energy
Consumption
(kWh) decreased
by **9.5%**
from 70,332,391 kWh in 2019/20
to 63,684,340 kWh in 2020/21



Our recycle rate is
61.68 %
(This is a decrease
on the previous
year's figure of 62.20%.)

- ⊙ In 2020/21, our overall Energy Consumption reduced by 9.5% compared to 2019/20, with all four areas showing a reduction in both consumption and carbon emissions i.e., Non-Domestic Buildings; Street Lighting; Fleet Mileage; and Business Mileage.

Whilst these reductions are in part attributable to the impact of COVID-19, the continuation of staff home working, together with changes in working practices such as an increased use of video conference facilities and online communication, should see a lasting reduction in carbon emissions in the longer term.

- ⊙ A fire at the Nantycaws Materials Recycling Facility this has meant that achieving the 64% recycling rate target for the 2021/22 financial year has not been possible. This is due to the restrictions and difficult market position facing CWM Environmental and the Council following the fire and continuing to have to rely on third party facilities throughout the year. This remains the case going into 2022/23, however we do have specific plans for improving recycling capture and quality going forward.

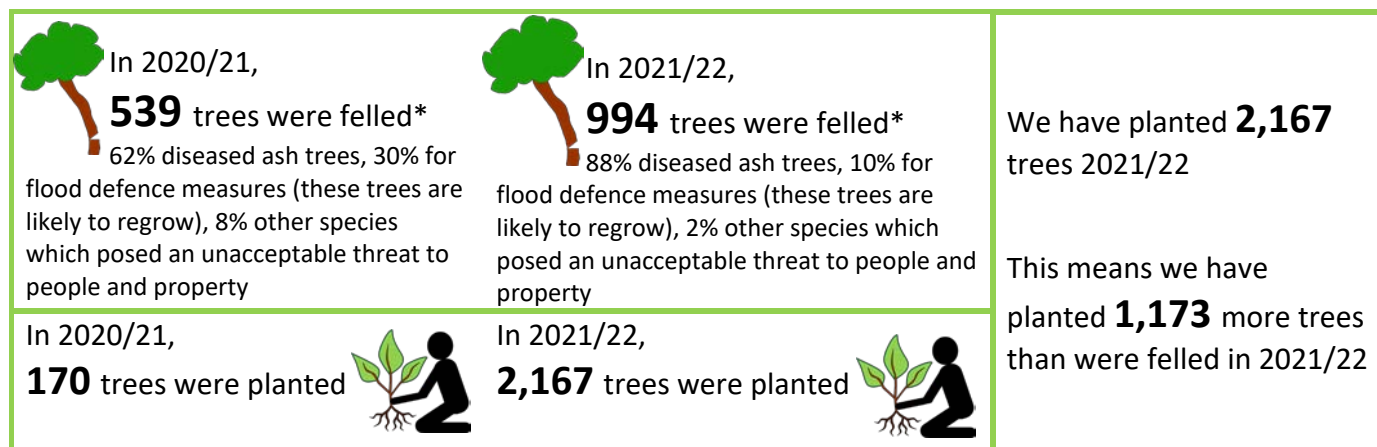
Progress on the steps we are taking to achieve this Well-being Objective

Address requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016

⦿ Declaration of Nature Emergency:

! A nature emergency has been declared by Welsh Government and we are setting up a Climate Change and Nature Emergency Advisory Panel to address this issue. We are delivering several projects to ensure nature recovery:

- We have improved heath and bog habitats at Figyn, Mynydd Figyn and Mynydd Staffalu Carn.
- Restored a pond at Llyn Llech Owain Country Park that can now be used for pond dipping.
- Enabled the Wildlife Trust to train staff and use tracking tunnels for monitoring dormice.
- Purchased grass cutting equipment to experiment with pollinator friendly practices.




*Trees are being felled due to ash die back, storm damage, safety, and some development requirements

⦿ Phosphate in Rivers

! New evidence about the damaging effects of phosphates to water ecosystems and species has resulted in the publishing of new targets by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to reduce river phosphate levels in special areas of conservation (SAC) across Wales. We have implemented several positive interventions, some of which are noted below:

- Developing and implementing the first and only Nutrient Calculator in Wales.
- Published a [phosphate webpage](#) which has been replicated by other authorities.

Deliver planning according to Planning (Wales) Act 2015

	<p>Audit Wales published the 'Planning Service Review' report in July 2021 that contained 17 recommendations and stated that:</p>
	<p><i>"Significant and long-standing performance issues in the planning service need to be urgently addressed to help support delivery of the Council's ambitions".</i> A range of interventions were implemented to focus on delivering the recommendations and a turnaround in performance has been achieved.</p>


⦿ There has been significant improvement on the determination of planning applications during the year. This is demonstrated by the following End of Year 2021/22 results:

	2020/21	2021/22	Improved by
% applications determined in time (PAM/018)	60.3% (735 of 1,219)	80.8% (1,536 of 1,900)	20.5%
% of planning appeals dismissed (PAM/019)	53.8% (7 of 13)	76.5% (13 of 17)	22.7%

The approval of major planning applications has a significant impact on job creation and the improvements made in planning during 2021/22 has resulted in the creation of 539 full-time and 52 part-time jobs (including 300 locating with the County) from the 95 applications approved. (See more WBO5 – Create More Jobs and Growth).

Net Zero Carbon (NZC) Local Authority by 2030

There have been 2 Internal Audits completed on NZC arrangements and their audit ratings were High.


	Internal Audit	Rating	Good Systems in Place	Good Governance
		High	✓	✓
		Acceptable		
		Low		

- Our Re:Fit Cymru Phase 1 project has now been completed. This comprised various energy conservation measures, including solar PV installations, at 29 of our non-domestic buildings including schools. Phase 1 is projected to save £315,726 | 675 tCO2e each year.


Working towards Net Zero Carbon we are trying to reduce energy consumption and emissions:

Annual Report Link	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21 vs 2021/22 % change
Non-Domestic Buildings				
Consumption (kWh)	66,407,242	59,808,497	Data not available at time of publication	Data not available at time of publication
Carbon Emissions (tCO2e)	14,443	12,581	Data not available at time of publication	Data not available at time of publication
Street Lighting				
Consumption (kWh)	3,925,149	3,875,843	3,599,124	7%
Carbon Emissions (tCO2e)	1,088	981	832	15%
Continued reduction in annual electricity consumption (kWh) in 2021/22. Virtually 100% of all CCC managed street lighting has now been converted to LED. Future savings will plateau until more energy efficient technologies become available and installed.				
Fleet Mileage				
Mileage (Miles)	5,154,668	4,427,070	4,262,681	3.7%
Diesel Used (Litres)	1,419,336	1,267,437	1,320,551	4.2%
Carbon Emissions (tCO2e)	3,814	3,407	3,573	4.9%
Whilst total mileage has marginally reduced, there was a marginal increase in the total diesel consumed which resulted in higher emissions in 2021/22 compared to 2020/21. [Note: The BEIS calculation is a very blunt instrument that defaults to a national average for fleet vehicles. This could be refined by calculating actual carbon emissions for each individual CCC vehicle. I understand that a Fleet Review is to be completed by September 2022 – this which inevitably result in the procurement of more electric / ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEV) which will significantly reduce carbon emissions]				
Business Mileage				
Mileage (Miles)	3,971,513	2,251,986	2,511,091	11.5%
Carbon Emissions (tCO2e)	1,132	621	693	11.6%
There was a very significant reduction in emissions in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20 (-45%). This was largely attributable to the impact of COVID-19 resulting in far greater homeworking and the use of ICT technology which reduced the need for travel. Whilst there has been a marginal increase in mileage and associated carbon emissions in 2021/22, emissions have not returned to the pre COVID-19 levels. [Note: The BEIS calculation is a very blunt instrument that defaults to a national average for fleet vehicles. This could be refined by calculating actual carbon emissions for each individual vehicle].				
Total				
Consumption (kWh)	70,332,391	63,684,340	Data not available at time of publication	Data not available at time of publication
Mileage (Miles)	9,126,181	6,679,056	Data not available at time of publication	Data not available at time of publication
Carbon Footprint (tCO2e)	20,477	17,590	Data not available at time of publication	Data not available at time of publication


- As well as procuring all its electricity from renewable energy sources, the Council has made other efforts to reduce carbon emissions including converting street lights to low energy LED and upgrading its fleet to include electric cars and more energy efficient refuse and gritting vehicles.

	<p>Public Sector Readiness for Net Zero Carbon by 2030: July 2022</p> <p>In the report, the Auditor General makes the following five calls for action from public bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Strengthen your leadership and demonstrate your collective responsibility through effective collaboration;</i> <i>Clarify your strategic direction and increase your pace of implementation;</i> <i>Get to grips with the finances you need;</i> <i>Know your skills gaps and increase your capacity; and</i> <i>Improve data quality and monitoring to support your decision making</i>
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NB: Early feedback shows that we are one of only a few authorities in Wales to have Net Zero Carbon plans in place

<p>Prosiect Zero Sir Gâr 2030: Carmarthenshire County Council has engaged thousands of children through this initiative - a targeted effort to bring people together to support the Council’s journey towards becoming net carbon zero by 2030. Primary school children across the county have been challenged to become ‘Prosiect Zero Super Heroes’, sharing their super powers and ideas to help Carmarthenshire tackle climate change.</p>	
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Flood & Water Management Act & Shoreline Management Plan

<p>Internal Audit</p> 	<p>Flood Defence (May 2021)</p> <p>The review sought to provide assurance that the Authority is managing flood risk in accordance with the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and the Flood Risk Management Plan.</p>	<p>Assurance Rating:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1161 1249 1342 1370"> <tr><td>High</td></tr> <tr><td>Acceptable</td></tr> <tr><td>Low</td></tr> </table> <p><i>Actions being tracked to improve rating</i></p>	High	Acceptable	Low
High					
Acceptable					
Low					

- Compared to previous years, 2021/22 has not seen as many significant flooding events resulting in high numbers of Carmarthenshire businesses and residents affected by internal flooding. That said, the winter of 2021/22 did result in significant flooding in places in October; which was followed up with Storms Arwen and Barra in late November and early December. The Council does not have responsibility for main river flooding, that rests with Natural Resources Wales.
 - Our flood incident management work has developed in 2021 and we are utilising more technology to advise on flood risk and prioritise resources.
 - Following the flooding events in Kidwelly in October 2021, we undertook a formal investigation and have successfully applied for Welsh Government grant funding to make improvements.
 - We have met with community leaders regarding current flood risk and future capital schemes. We continue to work collaboratively with partners, including Natural Resources Wales on the evolution of flood risk management interventions where appropriate.
 - The move from traditional sea defence to coastal adaption will be key in the future. In addition, all our coastal assets were inspected, and defects actioned accordingly.

- In 2021/22, following the development of business cases, we received £650,000 in revenue and capital grants from Welsh Government. Furthermore, we have received grants for developing feasibility work and business cases for various specific flood mitigation works worth circa £245,000.
- This year we have managed a £2.5 million works programme across 15 mitigation projects.

Towards Zero Waste strategy

	<p>During the last year Audit Wales undertook a review of the Waste Services, it's principal finding was that: "The Council has met its statutory recycling targets and has recently drafted a strategy to make its waste service more sustainable, but it has not finalised the strategy or got a clear plan for dealing with the large number of fly-tipping incidents in the county"</p> <p>An action plan to fully address the report's recommendations has been implemented.</p>
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- We have finalised our [Waste Strategy](#). This strategy sets out the considerations and measures proposed for future improvement of the waste service to achieve 70% recycling by 2024/25 and the expected 80% target by 2030.
- Our consultation and engagement on the Future Waste Strategy had over 4,000 responses and directly shaped our future service design. We have listened to that feedback, and from next year we will be carrying out separate collections of nappies and glass so that there is less waste to put in black bags.

Local Environment Quality (LEQ)

- We have published a [LEQ Management Plan 2022-2026](#) which details the direction of the Council's litter management within the county for the next 4 years.
- We have responded to 5,026 fly tipping requests with an average response for clearance within 2.4 days. This response rate has returned to pre pandemic rates.
- We have worked with our volunteers from communities throughout Carmarthenshire to tackle Local Environment Quality (LEQ) issues. In the past twelve months, the Council, community groups, schools and partners have collected over 2,000 bags of littered and fly-tipped waste from throughout the County. This fantastic result has been achieved with help from almost 1,400 volunteers working hard to help keep Carmarthenshire clean, with almost 350 litter picks organised in partnership with us.



Cleanliness Performance Data	2020/21	2021/22	Comment
Keep Wales Tidy Cleanliness Index for Highways (STS/005a)	80.7% (740.5/918)	76.8% (903.5/1,176)	! These measures are on target but have declined on the previous year. The number of inspections undertaken this year are back to pre-COVID numbers and we have exceeded the number of inspections and plot hotspot areas.
We will maintain a high level of streets that are clean (PAM/010)	98.1% (177/181)	94.1% (369/392) <small>This result exceeds the National Target of 92%</small>	

SIOP ETO

The Eto shop opened in February 2022 and has a real buzz about it. Popular with locals and visitors alike it is an Aladdin's cave of all sorts of affordable domestic goods ranging from, sports equipment, pictures, ornaments and much, much more. These are all items that would have otherwise been thrown away. Now though they are brought back to life and benefiting others.



This project is the start of a long-term ambition for the Council to ensure that as much of these items can be reused to benefit the environment and reduce the need to create further products. Preventing the waste entering the waste stream through repair and reuse is the overall goal so that local people can benefit from the project.

Since opening in late February over 750 items have found new homes, this equates to just under six tonnes of waste items being reused rather than being landfilled. Staff at the shop are continuously helping shoppers to look for what they need and note down items of interest or would like to see stocked in the shop.

Working in partnership with CWM Environmental on this project has allowed for a collaborative approach with residents to provide goods which they will benefit from buying. The shop has a community feel and our aim is to connect with the people of Llanelli town and the County to make this project meet their needs and ensure they are able to benefit from it.



What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Address requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016		
1	To advise and shape our response to the Nature Emergency declaration by Welsh Government in June 2021 Action ID 15665	March 2023	Rosie Carmichael
2	Three new areas of woodland are being established for the creation of new wildlife habitat that will contribute towards nature recovery, sequestration of carbon, creating areas for nature close to where people live and work. Action ID 15711	March 2023	Rosie Carmichael
3	To continue to work with partners to meet the damaging challenge of Phosphate in Rivers. Action ID 15681	March 2023	Ian Llewellyn
B	Deliver planning according to Planning (Wales) Act 2015		
1	To implement the adopted LDP and monitor its success or otherwise against its identified delivery measures ensuring policies, procedures and practices are being adhered to. Action ID 15674	March 2023	Ian Llewellyn
2	Ensure determination of all Planning Applications within agreed Welsh Government timescales. Measure PAM018	March 2023	Hugh Towns
3	To learn the lessons from the Planning Audit Wales report and the successful intervention approach taken and use as a blueprint if needed in future. Action ID 15682 (relates to audit report only)	March 2023	Rhodri Griffiths

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
C	Net Zero Carbon Local Authority by 2030		
1	The development of a strategic regional Eco- Park. Action ID 15662	March 2023	Dan John
2	To produce and manage the implementation of the Authorities Net Zero Carbon Plan to achieve the Council's commitment to become a Net Zero Carbon Plan local authority by 2030. Action ID 15699 + 15705	March 2023	Kendal Davies
D	Flood & Water Management Act & Shoreline Management Plan		
1	Manage and mitigate flood risk within our communities. Action ID 15993	Oct 2024	Ben Kathrens
E	Towards Zero Waste strategy		
1	Maintain, enhance, and improve the quality of the built and natural environment through the reduction of litter pollution, thereby creating a healthy and safe environment. Action ID 15689	Sep 2022	Geinor Lewis
2	Improve the way we manage waste in Carmarthenshire, increasing the waste reused, recycled or composted. Delivering against national beyond recycling strategy. Measure PAM030	March 2024	Dan John



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



Well-being Objective 11 Healthy & Safe Environment - Improve the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity

Continued deterioration of highways infrastructure

We have adopted a risk-based approach which has focused investment in road surfaces predominantly on the higher-class roads.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- Transportation & highways play a key role in supporting and sustaining our communities, it provides the vital infrastructure which connects people to one another, binds communities and enables businesses to grow and expand. A modern, successful economy is reliant upon the safe and efficient movement of people and goods and providing opportunities for people to gain access to employment, education, health, leisure and shopping.



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

Roads that are in poor condition:



3.6% of our **A Class**
(An improvement on 4.1% in 2020/21)

2.8% of our **B Class**
(An improvement on 3.4% in 2020/21)

11.8% of our **C Class**
(An improvement on 12% in 2020/21)

The number of people being killed or seriously injured on the roads during 2021 to **81**

(2nd highest in Wales)

(55 in 2020)

Source: Stats Wales

- The condition of our main roads in Carmarthenshire has improved during 2021/22.** Carmarthenshire has the second largest highway network in Wales, more than double the Welsh average, and although we are a predominantly rural County, we have the third highest traffic volumes. Through additional investment and in line with our risk-based approach we have improved the condition of our main roads, and this benefits a large number of road users. Compared to other local authorities we are still within the lower quartile for road condition, so more investment is required to maintain this key infrastructure than is available.
- Carmarthenshire has the second largest road network in Wales and the third highest traffic levels which has an influence on road collision statistics. In 2020 the covid pandemic suppressed travel levels in Wales generally which then rose in 2021 towards pre-pandemic levels. This has unfortunately led to an associated increase in the number of casualties killed or seriously injured on our roads, from 55 in 2020 to 81 in 2021 (111 in 2019). The overall trends remain downwards, and our Traffic & Road Safety Team continue to work in partnership with emergency services to promote improved road safety through education, enforcement and engineering. Specific initiatives focused on motorcyclists such as Dragon Rider provides training sessions to enhance riding skills and the Bike Down training sessions for motorcyclists to provide first aid skills in emergency situations to enable those first on scene to preserve life. The number of motorcyclists killed or seriously injured on our roads increased to 16 in 2021 from 10 in 2020 but remains lower than pre-pandemic figures of 25 in 2019. The number of 16-24 year olds killed or seriously injured reduced to 5 in 2021 (from 8 in 2020 and 17 in 2019). Our work with partner agencies to influence further reductions continue with a range of measures and engagement events, such as our Pass Plus Cymru initiative, where we work with driving instructors to give our young drivers enhanced skills as they take to our roads and our Mega Drive initiative focuses on 16-18 year olds to enhance road safety awareness and is delivered in partnership with Go Safe and our emergency services.

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

Developing highway infrastructure

Key projects:

- **Cross Hands Economic Link Road** - this will be completed in the Summer of 2022. This represents the culmination of many years of planning and construction to deliver a key project which opens access to strategic employment and economic areas in Cross Hands and the wider area and will significantly improve traffic flows in the area. A shared use path is also being created along the link to encourage and support more walking and cycling in the area.
 - **M4 Junction 48 Improvements** - working in partnership with Welsh Government this major highway improvement scheme was completed in the winter of 2021. The project has significantly improved traffic flows at this crucial artery serving the Llanelli area and eased traffic congestion.
 - **Tywi Valley Path** - this ambitious project will create a 20Km off-road walking and cycling route linking Carmarthen to Llandeilo running alongside the River Tywi. **We have secured £16.7m of Levelling Up funding to enable the development and delivery of this key project.**
- For Active Travel, we have installed bike hire stations at key travel nodes such as Carmarthen Bus and Llanelli Railway Stations.
- Internally, there is a need to align and adapt our services to ensure we can meet the major challenges ahead. Several of our IT and information systems need to be developed and modernised, our workforce has adapted and will need to adapt further for the future, to enable us to digitally transform our operational processes to improve customer experience and efficiencies.
- Public Rights of Way service which manages an extensive network of footpaths, bridleways and byways.

Route Type	Number of Routes	Length (KM)
Footpath	2956	2282.0
Bridleway	138	166.06
Byway Open to All Traffic	88	81.3
Restricted Byway	1	1.6
Totals	3183	2530.96

*September 2022

We are improving Electric Charging Infrastructure. We now have 41 fast charging points across the county. We have launched our ten-year Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy. The superfast charging hub, pictured, is located off the A48 in Cross Hands and will provide four 50KW rapid chargers and one 150KW super rapid charger. The chargers draw power from 100% renewable energy sources and the photovoltaic cells on the canopy roof linked to battery backup storage on site will help reduce draw from the national grid. The project is funded through the Welsh Government's Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle Fund.



Our new, first of its kind in Wales, electric vehicle charging hub in Cross Hands

Integrated Public Transport Network

- We are working with our regional partners and Welsh Government to develop a strategic passenger transport project, referred to as the Metro for South West Wales. This will provide sustainable travel with rail and bus corridors through the region along key corridors routes which integrate with local connections.
- We are currently actively progressing the introduction of electric buses on the well-established T1 bus service between Carmarthen and Aberystwyth (see case study) and to explore the potential role and feasibility of piloting hydrogen powered buses in the region. This exciting project may represent a key alternative fuel source for the future with significant transport implications.

- ! The passenger transport industry has experienced very turbulent times and there are continuing factors impacting the industry. COVID-19 has had a fundamental impact on passenger numbers and hence revenues for operators. We have worked with Welsh Government to support the bus industry through this very difficult time and further global influences such as high fuel prices, driver shortages and staff sickness continue to create challenges within the industry. Our Passenger Transport Team have worked with operators to support them through this difficult time to continue providing essential services for customers. People in Carmarthenshire feel the pressures of the loss of public transport.
- ⊙ To improve the customer experience, we have utilised Welsh Government funding to install 42 Real Time Information displays, high quality bus shelters, wayfinding signage, significant infrastructure enhancements at Carmarthen and Llanelli Bus stations. These improvements are designed to encourage modal shift away from the private car thereby contributing to carbon reduction, social inclusion and economic activity, as well as improving the attractiveness, accessibility and vitality of our economic centres.

Support Community and Rural Transport

- ⊙ We successfully manage and provide a lead role in the LINC project on behalf of Welsh Government which includes the Fflecsi, Bwcabus and Trawscymru networks. These initiatives provided essential transport services throughout COVID-19, enabling key workers to continue to access employment. The service continued to be available 6 days a week 7am-7pm throughout the pandemic. Bwcabus has formed a new partnership with Viavan and Transport for Wales in May 2021, utilising Transport for Wales' new booking system and launching the rebranded service Fflecsi Bwcabus in October 2021. Fflecsi Bwcabus now enables passengers to book and manage journeys via an App as well as via a new call centre.

Road Safety Strategy

- ⊙ A new 20mph speed limit has been introduced in large areas of North and South Llanelli. These two large scale Welsh Government funded projects have involved working in partnership with local communities, elected representatives and schools.

Modernising our vehicle Fleet

- ! Our vehicle fleet are an essential supporting part of the services provided across the Council. Continuing to support our fleet and bringing in additional vehicles to maintain services through the COVID-19 pandemic has been particularly challenging but nevertheless achieved. Whilst the pandemic is now receding, new challenges are emerging such as high fuel prices, driver shortages across the logistics industry and a shortage of vehicle fitters which continue to provide a stern test.
- ⊙ We are currently reviewing our Fleet Replacement Strategy which will include a transition to vehicles with sustainable fuel sources. This must carefully align with market supply as it continues to develop to ensure that the technological risks and financial risks to the Council are minimised and will need to ensure supporting infrastructure for fuelling and maintenance are in place.
- ⊙ The market supply for electric vehicles, and particularly for cars and small vans has developed quickly and is now providing reliable electric vehicle options for our Council Fleet. To support this transition Welsh Government funding has been secured to introduced 2 additional electric pool cars in 21/22. We also have the following programme to install 6 rapid and 13 fast chargers at our depots:
 - Trostre Depot (Llanelli) – 3 Rapid chargers (50kW) and 6 fast chargers (7-22kW)
 - Cillefwr Depot (Carmarthen) – 2 Rapid Chargers (50kW) and 4 fast chargers (7-22kW)
 - Cwmamman Depot (Glanaman) – 2 fast chargers (7-22kW)
 - County Hall (Carmarthen) – 1 Rapid Charger (50kW) and 1 fast charger (7-22kW)

The market supply for larger and heavy goods is less developed and operational challenges exist. Alternative fuel sources such as hydrogen are likely to be part of a future solution, but this area requires further development.

Electric Buses for the TrawsCymru T1 Service: Carmarthen to Aberystwyth

We are bringing forward an exciting project in partnership with Welsh Government, Transport for Wales to replace the current bus fleet operating the T1 Carmarthen to Aberystwyth service with a brand new electric bus fleet. This £5m+ project is being funded by Welsh Government and will include the construction of a new bespoke bus depot located adjacent to the Nant y Ci Park and Ride site in Carmarthen just off the A40.

The service will operate with a fleet of 8 new electric buses which are currently being built. The new fleet of electric buses are expected to come into service in September 2022. Thousands of customers every year will benefit from an improved ride quality on high specification vehicles with wi-fi facilities and know that the journey is being made on a zero-emission vehicle.



What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Highway Infrastructure		
1	Deliver key infrastructure schemes Action ID 15713/15714	Sep 2022	Adrian Harries
B	Integrated Public Transport Network		
1	We will continue to work with national and regional bodies to develop the Southwest Wales Metro to support carbon reduction and the local economy Action ID 15759	March 2025	Stephen Pilliner
2	Monitor supply market for passenger transport to adapt services where required to changing supply conditions Action ID 15764	March 2023	Alwyn Evans
C	School Transport network		
1	We will continue to support the delivery of the Modernising Education Programme – redesigning networks to facilitate the movement of pupils as set out in our home to school transport policy Action ID 15767	March 2023	Alwyn Evans
D	Support Community and rural Transport		
1	Develop Community Transport Strategy to enable access to essential services from rural communities Action ID 15773	March 2023	Alwyn Evans
E	Integrated Public Transport Network		
1	We will support the development and delivery of a new railway station at St Clears Action ID 15787/15788/15789	Nov 2023	Simon Charles
F	Modernising our vehicle Fleet		
1	Update Fleet Replacement Programme & Strategy to transition towards Ultra Low Emission Vehicles and Depot Infrastructure Action ID 15716/15717/15718/15719/15720/15721/15722/15723	March 2023	Antonia Jones



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



Well-being Objective 12 Healthy & Safe Environment - Promote Welsh Language & Culture

Following a challenging COVID-19 impacted 2 years for our Cultural services, we have made significant progress in protecting and enhancing our Cultural offer across the County with investment in key strategic facilities and services.

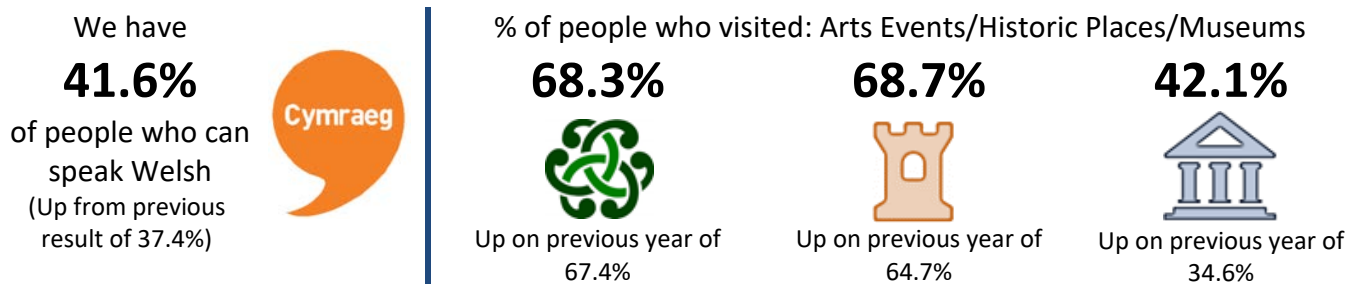
Why this Well-being Objective is important

- ⊙ We have the highest number of Welsh speakers in our county compared to the rest of Wales, which makes Carmarthenshire a key strategic stronghold for the future of the Welsh language; however, we are also the county with the greatest reduction in the percentage of Welsh speakers according to the 2011 Census figures, which makes taking positive action crucial. The social and economic benefits of bilingualism are widely recognised, and research shows that 86% of individuals in Wales feel that the Language is beneficial to both the economy and individuals through cognitive and social benefits.
- ⊙ It is a unique selling point. Tourist and hospitality industries throughout Europe are now realising the importance of offering unique experiences. Having two languages and a sense of Welsh history and culture places Carmarthenshire in a strong position.
- ⊙ The pandemic has had a significant impact on opportunities to use Welsh socially and consistent action needs to be taken to safeguard its use as a living language.
- ⊙ The proportion of children acquiring the Welsh language in the home has decreased significantly over the last half century. Positive action needs to be taken to ensure all children can become bilingual.
- ⊙ Research has shown that, in general, people in Wales who regularly attend or participate in cultural activities are more likely to report higher subjective well-being and potential mental health benefits are seen.



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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results



Source: National Survey for Wales (sample size 600)

People who can Speak Welsh

- ⊙ 2021/22 National Survey for Wales data published in July 2022 showed that **41.6%** of participants said they could **speak Welsh** (based on a sample of 600 residents), this is the 3rd highest in Wales moving above Ceredigion for the first time in this survey. Our result also shows an improvement on the previous survey result of 37.4%. The National Survey for Wales gives a good annual indication of the number of Welsh speakers; however, the Census is the only source that gives a whole population figure, with 43.9% (78,000 speakers) noted in 2011, the highest number of Welsh speakers in any county. The initial Census 2021 findings were published in the July 2022 and the main releases two years after the Census (Spring 2023). This will provide the firmest evidence base for Welsh language skills in the County.

People who visited Arts Events, Historic Places and Museums

- ⦿ The most recent data published in June 2020 for participants from Carmarthenshire **attending an arts event, visiting historical places or visiting a museum** had increased. Both visits to Arts events and Museums were below the Welsh average of 70.4% and 42.5% respectively but the % visiting historic places are above the Welsh average of 62.5. *Please note that the questions asked whether they attended or visited these places in Wales and not specifically in Carmarthenshire.*

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

Implement and monitor the Welsh Language Standards

- ⦿ 30 members of staff from various departments have received training and enabled us to further strengthen our network of Welsh Language leaders who have an extended knowledge of the Welsh Language Standards within the Council's departments.
- ⦿ We provided a continuous flow of internal communication to ensure staff awareness of their responsibility under the Standards and published new and revised guidelines and flowcharts to promote appropriate working practices.
- ⦿ We established a new, monthly on-line opportunity (Y Clwb Clebran) for staff to use their Welsh language to mitigate the potential detrimental effect of the new ways of working on staff Welsh language skills and their ability to deliver services through the medium of Welsh.

The development of Welsh in all our Education services

- ⓘ Please see WBO3 - The development of Welsh in all our (Education) services

The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy

- ⦿ Extensive work was done to gather information and establish a set of measures from partner organisations to compile a report on the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and Action Plan 2016-21.
- ⦿ Preparatory work was done, including consultation with partner organisations, to form the new direction and content of the Welsh language Promotion Strategy for 2022-27.
- ⦿ We have facilitated the multi-agency Fforwm Iaith Sirol / County Welsh Language Strategic Forum, organising quarterly meetings to drive the work of the Promotion Strategy forward.
- ⦿ Extensive inter-departmental work was done to establish the Welsh language at the core of the Council's economic development work, to ensure that our regeneration programme is carried out in a way that will have a positive impact on the Welsh language.

Promoting our Welsh Culture & Heritage

- ⦿ Our investment into an exhibitions gallery on the first floor of Carmarthen Museum has enabled us to establish a partnership with the National Gallery London, to showcase world renowned artwork and collections here in Carmarthenshire, raising the profile of our Cultural offer and engagement with our local and visiting population.
- ⦿ £500k has been invested at Parc Howard Museum to replace the roof and to create a new café space for community use over the coming months and years. Working closely with the Friends of Parc Howard, Parc Howard Association and Llanelli Town Council, plans are being realised to relocate an accessible museum reception and retail area, as well as enhance interpretation and exhibition.
- ⦿ The new Museum of Land Speed, part of the Pendine Attractor project which also includes a new 44 bed hotel is due for completion in late Summer 2022. Working in partnership with Pendine Community Council over the past 2 years, this project will further enhance our Cultural and Tourism offer within the County, whilst regenerating this key coastal destination, a few miles down the coast from our iconic Dylan Thomas Boathouse in Laugharne.
- ⦿ A brand new £2m Archive has been completed and is scheduled for opening in July 2022 as our invaluable collections return to the new depository, situated at Carmarthen Library.
- ⦿ Our Theatrau Sir Gâr service undertook a research and development project for a new Welsh language comedy

- Libraries 24/7 - Remote Locker solutions are being installed at Whitland, Brynaman and Newcastle Emlyn Libraries to allow for greater access and flexibility for users to book, deposit and collect books at rural locations. Self-check in/out Beacons are now established at all Libraries with the All-Wales Library app now operational across the County network of libraries.



Support our Annual Cultural awards and promoting Annual Village and Town of Culture

- Our Town and Village of Culture programme is re-starting, following a difficult COVID-19 impacted 2 years, whilst our annual Cultural awards evening re-established itself in early Spring 2022 with a fantastic evening at our flagship Ffwrnes Theatre in Llanelli, celebrating our fantastic cultural offer and the work of our partners and volunteers across the County.

Is anyone better off?

We have worked in collaboration with the Tywi Gateway Trust to secure external funding and invest over £2m into the redevelopment and long-term sustainability of the Bishop’s Park, the grounds of the Old Bishop’s Palace and home to Carmarthenshire Museum in Abergwili, Carmarthen. A new Visitor Centre for the park with its glass-roofed Café is completed, bringing the old palace outbuildings into public use. Landscaping to improve access, habitat management and biodiversity conservation, with interpretive signage throughout the park help people enjoy and connect with their heritage and environment.

The Trust involves volunteers and the local community as part of the long-term investment into the site, which has also seen the local authority and external funders investing over £1m into its County Museum building. The museum is managed by CofGâr, Carmarthenshire County Council’s Museum service. Restoring the historic museum, creating an accessible entrance, and refurbishing galleries preserves and promotes our County’s unique cultural heritage collections. And special exhibitions and programmes explore themes connected with the environment, wellbeing, and current issues, helping people to learn from the past to improve today and plan for tomorrow.

The holistic development of the site now known as **Carmarthenshire Museum and the Bishops Park** is a collaboration unique in Wales between a local authority and charity. Connectivity is a shared value, helping build more cohesive, resilient communities, whilst creating opportunities for people to live healthier, more connected lives.

The project is live and new elements continue to be added. An accessible ramp into the Great Meadow will be installed, creating access into a unique habitat previously in private ownership. A grant has been awarded to the Trust to develop detailed plans and costs for the Walled Garden, a project focussing on social impact, sustainable food production, and skills development. And as Carmarthenshire Museum and the Bishops Park becomes a major hub at the start of the Tywi Valley Path, the benefits of walking and cycling for local communities, businesses and tourism will be realised.



What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Implement and monitor the Welsh Language Standards		
1	We will publish an annual report on the implementation of the Welsh Language Standards for the period 2022/23 (13280)	June 2023	Llinos Evans
2	We will review the current Internal Use of the Welsh language Policy and prepare a framework to support departments to increase the use of the Language in administration (15486)	March 2023	Gwyneth Ayers
3	We will publish and adopt a policy on Awarding Grants and the Welsh language (16112)	March 2023	Gwyneth Ayers
4	The % of staff at Level 3 of the Welsh language skills framework (Cym/001) (Baseline 2021/22= ? %)	No target	Gwyneth Ayers
5	The % of posts recruited at the required level of the advertised post (Cym/002) (Baseline 2021/22=? %)	No target	Gwyneth Ayers
6	The number of staff following Welsh language skills learning and improvement courses (Cym/003) (Baseline 2021/22=?)	No target	Gwyneth Ayers
B	The development of Welsh in all our Education services		
1	See Well-being Objective 3		
C	The Welsh Language Promotion Strategy		
1	We will review and refresh the County's Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and Action Plan considering the progress to date and the Census 2021 results, which are expected during the year (14896)	March 2023	Gwyneth Ayers
2	We will publish a report on the current Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (16113)	March 2023	Llinos Evans
3	We will work with partnership organisations on the promotion of the Welsh language in Llanelli (16115)	March 2023	Llinos Evans
4	We will lead and administer the County Welsh Language Strategic Forum and instigate the delivery of the revised action plan (16116)	March 2023	Llinos Evans
5	We will continue to work in partnership to ensure the delivery of the county's regeneration work has a positive impact on the Welsh language (16117)	March 2023	Llinos Evans
D	Promoting our Welsh Culture & Heritage		
1	We will work with the Marketing & Media Team and other key services to lay the foundations for, and welcome, the Urdd Eisteddfod to Llandovery in 2023 (16118)	June 2023	Llinos Evans
2	We will deliver a transformation plan for the existing Museums provision at the County Museum Abergwili, Parc Howard, Kidwelly Industrial Museum and Museum of Speed Pendine to improve the provision for residents and visitors (13289)	April 2023	Ian Jones



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

Better Governance and Use of Resources





Well-being Objective 13 Better Governance and use of Resources

Better Governance

We have improved performance management arrangements

We have:

- ◆ produced a Performance Management Framework
- ◆ improved engagement and assurance on business planning to improve self-assessment
- ◆ introduced more integrated quarterly performance management monitoring and assessment

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- ⊙ The general purpose of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015, is to ensure that the governance arrangements of public bodies for improving the Well-being of Wales take the needs of future generations into account. To make this work there are key areas of corporate change that are required by the Act.
- ⊙ There are increasing demands and expectations yet less resources are available. Under these conditions we need to work even more efficiently and effectively to maintain services and improve where we can, delivering 'more (or even the same) for less'.
- ⊙ The way we work needs to focus on the long term, working in partnership and collaboration, involving people more, preventing problems before they materialise and ensuring we work in an integrated way to maximise our resources and reduce duplication; one of the ways we do this is through the Public Services Board (PSB).

1 Corporate Planning	Covered by Better Governance
2 Performance Management	
3 Workforce Planning	
4 Financial Planning	Covered by Better Use of Resources
5 Assets	
6 Procurement	
7 Risk	

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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results

71.2% of people agree that they can access information about us in the way they would like to
(previously 72.4%)
(Welsh average 74.9%)

74.6% of people know how to find what services we provide
(previously 72.1%)
(Welsh average 75.8%)
Source: National Survey for Wales

35.5% of people agree that they have an opportunity to participate in making decisions about the running of our services
(previously 9%)
(Welsh average 33.8%)

Staff sickness
11.4 days per year
(previously 7.7 days)



According to the 2019/20 National Survey for Wales:

- ⊙ **71.2%** of participants agreed that they could access information about us in the way they preferred, below the Welsh average of 74.9%, and in 17th position.
- ⊙ **74.6%** agreed that they knew how to find what services we provide; below the Welsh average of 75.8% and in 13th position in Wales.
- ⊙ 2021/22 National survey for Wales results published in July 2022 shows that **35.5% agreed that they have an opportunity to participate in making decisions about the running of our services**, this is a vast improvement on the 2019/20 result of only 9% and is above the Welsh average of 33.8%. There has been a general increase across all authorities and comparatively, we have moved up to 5^h position from 21st previously.

Staff Sickness

- ⦿ **Sickness figures** at the end of 2021/22 of **11.4 FTE days** is 3.7 days higher than last year and above the 2019/20 Welsh average of 11.2 FTE days (Authority 2019/20 performance was 10.74 FTE days). This is our highest sickness figure since 2008/09 (11.7 days) **However, it is important to note that this has been impacted by COVID-19 related sickness absence, which accounted for 2 FTE days per employee during 2021/22.** National benchmarking data indicates this increase is evidenced across all industries particularly sectors delivering frontline/operational services where working from home was limited.
- ⦿ The service areas with the highest sickness absence figures are Waste & Environment, Adult Social Care, Access to Education and Housing Property & Special Projects and Special Schools which are mainly front-line operational services which have been at the forefront of supporting our communities during the pandemic. The causes of absence are monitored and the impact and legacy of COVID-19 continues. People Management division provides advice and support for managers, who have the responsibility to manage attendance, they are provided with sickness data and analysis to plan appropriate action to ensure cases are managed and employees supported, in line with our sickness policies and guidelines.

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

Corporate Planning

- ⦿ To judge the progress of the Corporate Strategy we set out a table of 44 success measures. Despite being blindsided by the COVID-19 Pandemic, over the last 5 years 60% of these measures have improved since the start of the Strategy. **See Appendix 2.**
- ⦿ The Corporate Strategy was updated twice during its course to make sure that our Well-being Objectives were still relevant and we consulted on them each year to ensure continued support. For each of our 13 Well-being Objectives we identified the key steps we were taking to achieve them and then via business plans identified key actions and measures for each step.
- ⦿ During 2021/22 it was evident that Scrutiny Committees wanted to see an improvement in the measurements and actions set out in business plans so that they could hold the Services to account and see what success looked like. As a result of this feedback, and in response to new Local Government & Elections Act requirements relating to performance and governance, Business Plan measurement and SMART Action planning has been improved.
- ⦿ To further strengthen the development of departmental business plans an officer **Engagement and Assurance process** was set up during 2021/22 to discuss departmental business plans with each Departmental Management Team.

Performance Management

- ⦿ During 2021/22 a **new Performance Management Framework was introduced.** This framework sets out the Council's approach to monitoring and managing the performance of the Council's services.
- ⦿ Actions and targets to deliver the Corporate Strategy are monitored on a quarterly basis. The Corporate Management Team, Cabinet Members and Scrutiny committees receive quarterly Performance Management reports as well as the end of year report.
- ⦿ During 2021/22 **we developed a more integrated quarterly performance monitoring approach.** These more analytical reports added Member Task and Finish Scrutiny investigation findings, customer feedback (complaints and compliments) financial, internal and external audit findings, risk, people, asset management and other relevant data to build up a more rounded picture of progress.

INTERNAL AUDIT



REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The overall objective of the review was to assess the adequacy of the performance and reporting arrangements in place.

ACTION

An action plan has been drafted to improve this rating.

ASSURANCE RATING

HIGH	
ACCEPTABLE	✓
LOW	



As part of our response to the new Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 we requested support from the Welsh Local Government Association to assess and challenge the adequacy of the Council's self-assessment arrangements and to provide advice on what further developments would encourage a culture of continuous improvement.

- ⊙ As a Council we already have a lot of data that we report and this needs to be better harnessed and consolidated. We want to make better use of data and in February 2022 we have set up a 'Data Insight' unit to corporately ensure that we become a data driven authority.
- ! We are taking a more critical assessment approach to producing the Annual Governance Statement so that it does not just set out what arrangements we have in place but how well they are working, how we know and what can we do better. We will also improve the timescales for its production.

Workforce Planning (People Management)

Carmarthenshire County Council has some 8,000 employees who each contribute to the achievement of our Corporate Priorities. We ensure that all staff are managed and developed in a fair and consistent way.



- ⊙ Our staff are encouraged to develop, and we are accredited with Investors in People.
- ⊙ Following Local Government Elections, we will **ensure learning & development is fully aligned with corporate priorities**, with needs and transformation plans integrated into our new Corporate Strategy.
- ⊙ The management of attendance and supporting **the well-being of staff** is a high priority for the Council. A robust attendance management framework and policy is in place and the Occupational Health function offers well-being support and advice with the aim of keeping people in work, providing advice and guidance on healthy living, stress management and mental health in the workplace. This has been particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic where support to staff has been stepped up via well-being initiatives and COVID-19 specific policies.
- ⊙ During 2021, a revised attendance management policy was introduced and associated e-learning to further support managers to manage attendance effectively. This is a priority for the Council, and management information is regularly provided to the Corporate Management Team and service managers for monitoring purposes.
- ⊙ Using existing governance arrangements (People Strategy Group) we will need to review our workforce strategy in light of the pandemic to support the organisation to recover.
- ⊙ During 2021 we held dedicated Local Government Association (LGA) facilitated workforce planning sessions with Corporate Management Team and Heads of Service; and developed an online workforce data dashboard for Heads of Service / Service Managers. We now need to build on this learning and consider the impact of COVID-19 on our workforce and develop a Strategic Workforce Plan.
- ⊙ Our annual **equal pay** audit does not suggest any evidence of discrimination within the pay structures, nor the allowances paid. The pay gaps are generally because of segregation of the sexes between job types rather than application of the allowances. As required, the Council publishes a Pay Policy each year to provide transparency on setting the pay of its employees. The Pay Policy is agreed by Full Council and is published on the Council's website.
- ⊙ The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated a move to **agile working** and it is intended that this will inform how the Council manages its workforce in the future through smarter and better ways of working. This will impact on accommodation requirements and contribute to our ambition to become net zero carbon by 2030 by reducing the need to travel. The Staff Travel Policy will be reviewed to reflect the move to new ways of working.
- ⊙ Our Whistleblowing Policy is being used by employees to report serious concerns which may be in the public interest. Online learning, promotion of the policy and monitoring of whistleblowing complaints continues to ensure that employees are aware of it.

Springing Forward - Strategic management of its workforce



Audit Wales undertook an all-Wales project to examine the local government overall arrangements and approach to transforming, adapting, and maintaining the delivery of services. For Carmarthenshire it found that - *The Council is improving the strategic planning for its workforce and is taking action to address staff capacity issues in key service areas but recognises that performance monitoring of workforce management needs strengthening.*

Ensuring Effective External Communication

Since the introduction of *My Hwb* account (for online services and payments), 78,163 residents have signed up for the service. We're adding more services online and reviewing our existing e-forms to ensure that they are easy to use.

- ⦿ The Hwb in Ammanford, Carmarthen and Llanelli offer pre-booked appointments and drop-in advice to an average 8,000 residents per month, as well as providing advice and access to training and employment support. This had to be taken forward in a different way during 2020/21 due to COVID19 restrictions and the establishments having to be closed. Customers have been able to contact online and telephone and virtual meetings have been held. The increasing use of Social Media has allowed open engagement and conversations with members of the public. In addition to this Social Media is an excellent tool for promoting council services.
- ⦿ Throughout 2021/22 we have seen an increase in residents and businesses accessing information, support and council services online, the number of visits to our website has increased yet again this year by a further 7%.
- ⦿ The pandemic without a doubt has supported this increase to the website and how we present information bilingually, often at very short notice has been welcomed and complimented by the public.
- ⦿ Accessibility of information is key and we are proud to have this year passed the accessibility standard. It is so important to remember that residents, visitors and businesses are now accessing the website in various ways and interestingly 58.9% access using their mobile device. This is key when considering how to present information to ensure we engage to as a wider audience as possible.
- ⦿ Key stats CCC website 2021/2022
 - Pageviews: 6,144,228
 - Sessions: 3017983
- ⦿ Key stats for social media, email marketing and video
 - 19.3m Twitter reach
 - 8.82m Facebook reach
 - Published 3259 posts
 - Dealt with 4055 'inbound' posts, enquiries via comments, written on our wall or sent as a direct message
 - 53.3k link clicks
 - Facebook – New followers – 1,201. Total followers: 20,451
 - Twitter – New followers – 372. Total followers 11,151
 - 443,141 emails sent to MyAccount, businesses and 3rd sector. 267,018 unique opens.
 - Video – 115,800 views

Is anyone better off?

Tackling Employee Poverty

The Council continues to support its lowest paid employees and workers by **continuing to pay the Real Living Wage supplement** to ensure that our lowest paid receive the equivalent of £9.90 per hour (including fixed allowances).

What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Corporate Planning		
1	Following Local Government Elections in May 2022 and the publication of the new administrations manifesto we will reset the Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives (15488)	July 2022	Gwyneth Ayers
2	We will further develop business planning processes and engagement and assurance approaches (15496)	July 2022	Gwyneth Ayers
B	Performance Management		
1	We will continue to develop the Performance Management Framework and our self-assessment processes (15496 & 15487)	March 2023	Rob James
2	We will continue to develop our Integrated Quarterly Performance Management Observations reporting (15496)	March 2023	Rob James
3	We will improve on the timescale for producing the Annual Governance Statement (16134)	March 2023	Helen Pugh
4	Develop an engagement and consultation plan for the authority (15580)	March 2023	Deina Hockenhill
C	Workforce Planning (People Management)		
1	We will develop a new Transformation Strategy; ensuring that Learning & Development priorities and programmes are fully aligned with corporate priorities and needs; further developing the Council's Leadership and Management Programme to support key corporate priorities (15516)	September 2022	Jon Owen
2	Further improve our recruitment processes via the introduction of new integrated recruitment IT system. (IIP) (15512 & 15507)	March 2023	Alison Wood / Jon Owen
3	We will evaluate the employee experience and undertake research to develop a Workforce Engagement Strategy that will underpin the new workforce strategy (15499 & 15500 & 15501)	June 2022	Cheryl Reynolds
4	We will develop more proactive preventative solutions such as promoting good health and educating employees on healthy lifestyle choices (15502)	March 2023	Heidi Font
5	Developing a set of performance and outcome measures that reflect the Council's ambitions for its workforce (16135)	March 2023	Cheryl Reynolds
D	Ensuring Effective External Communication		
1	Deliver the council's corporate communications strategy following the key principle of <i>One Council, One Vision, One Voice</i> . As part of the launch of this strategy, communicate and embed a corporate communications standard across all departments to ensure the basic principles of communication are understood and utilised by all - for example, communications are always accessible, bilingual, friendly and with a clear call to action (15569)	August 2023	Deina Hockenhill

Making Better Use of Resources

Through careful financial planning we have been able to set a balanced budget that will support the Council to continue delivering vital services and will allow us to continue to provide first class services to the residents and businesses of Carmarthenshire.

Why this Well-being Objective is important

- There are increasing demands and expectations yet less resources are available. Under these conditions we need to work even more efficiently and effectively to maintain services and improve where we can, delivering 'more (or even the same) for less'.

The general purpose of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015, is to ensure that the governance arrangements of public bodies for improving the Well-being of Wales take the needs of future generations into account. To make this work there are **7 key areas** of corporate change that are required by the Act.

- 4 Financial Planning
 - 5 Assets
 - 6 Procurement
 - 7 Risk
- Better Use of Resources**

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

Success Measures / Explaining the Results



5.85% increase of online payments (From 53,454 to 56,582 transactions)

Financial Impact:

We have administered and have paid:

- £78m** of grants to support local business
- £3.4m** of Winter Fuel Support Scheme payments.
- £397.6k** of Discretionary Housing Payments.
- Over £4m** of Self Isolation Support Payments and 10,754 applications received.



Through our delivery of **Community Benefits** **548 person weeks** of targeted recruitment & training was delivered

9.9% of people agree that we ask for their views before setting our budget (previously 11.3%) (Welsh average 9.2% and in 9th place) (Source: National Survey for Wales)



Online payments

- Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and with increased access to online services, this has created a natural shift with many customers contacting us, submitting forms and documents and paying for our services electronically with a 5.85% increase in the number of online payments from 53,454 in 2020/21 to 56,582 transactions during 2021/22.

Organisational 'running costs'

- We have administered a total of £78 million from Welsh Government Grants to the Carmarthenshire Business Community to support businesses during these challenging times.
- Since November 2021, we have administered the Winter Fuel Support Scheme and processed 9,480 cases and have paid out £3,409,200 to support Carmarthenshire residents.
- We have paid out £397,584 of Discretionary Housing Payments and up to mid-March received 10,754 Self Isolation Support Payment applications and paid out over £4 million to eligible claimants.

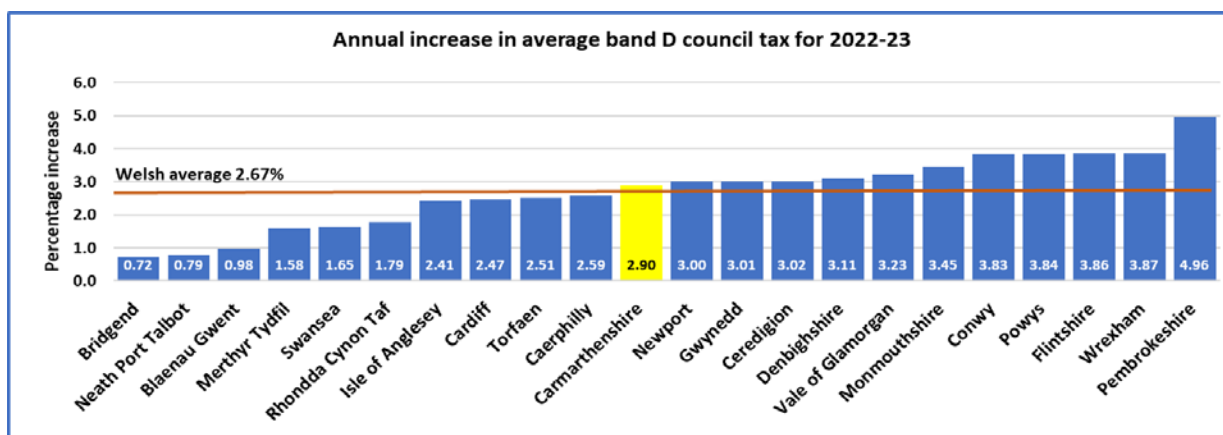
- Through our delivery of Community Benefits over 548 person weeks of targeted recruitment and training was delivered in 2021/22 through the Council’s 21st Century Schools project across the County.
- We have claimed £27.4 million from Welsh Government via hardship claims to support additional COVID-19 services. We have also claimed £4.5million relating to claims for loss of income.
- Despite inflationary pressures on a truly unprecedented scale, the Council was able to set a balanced budget of £416 million which provided sufficient funding to sustain service levels, realised efficiency savings where possible and curtailed council tax as much as possible to 2.5%.

People agree that the Council asks for their views and as part of Carmarthenshire County Council budget consultation we sort views of members and public before setting the budget

- The 2019/20 National Survey for Wales showed the number of participants agreed that *we ask for their views before setting our budget* was 9% (Welsh average 9.2%), this is a decline on the previous year of 11.3% and in 9th position (previously 7th). Due to COVID-19 there is no updated data available for the measure, although we continued to hold our annual budget consultation and engaged with councillors and members of the public.

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

Financial Planning



- Carmarthenshire has the 11th lowest annual % increase at 2.90% and just above the Welsh average of 2.67%. This is the lowest % increase since 2012/13 at 2.38%. The Council Tax levels in Carmarthenshire is the 9th lowest in Wales (Band D) at £1,799.92 an almost £320 less than the highest level in Wales and just above the Welsh average of £1,777.18.

- Audit of Financial Statement** – An unqualified Audit report was received from Audit Wales on all statements (financial year 2020-21) and the audit found no major issue other than generic-all Wales matters, considering we have undertaken £140 million of additional COVID-19 related funding across dozens of specific grants.



- A mixed methods approach to ascertain views on the 2022-25 budget took place and this was publicised in local and regional press, local radio advertisements and via equality groups including Equality Carmarthenshire, Ageing Well Forum, Carmarthenshire Disability Coalition of Action and via Town and Community Councils. There was a low response rate, possibly due to COVID-19 restrictions and concerns. Responses were received via the Council’s online consultation page on the website, emails were submitted together with social media responses via Facebook and Twitter and all comments and views were taken into consideration. [REVENUE BUDGET 2020 to 2023 \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/revenue-budget-2020-to-2023)

- There have been 3 Internal Audits completed during 2021-22 looking at the following areas and their audit findings were:

INTERNAL AUDIT



RATING	COUNCIL TAX	NNDR	AGS
HIGH			
ACCEPTABLE	✓	✓	✓
LOW			

We are tracking action plans to improve these ratings

Assets

- Just under £2.9m was generated from Capital receipts during 2021/22 which exceeds our target by almost £0.75m, this covers some of the £0.4m shortfall in 2019/20 and £1.8m shortfall 2020/21.

SPRINGING FORWARD – STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF ASSETS



Audit Wales undertook an all-Wales project to examine the local government overall arrangements and approach to transforming, adapting, and maintaining the delivery of services. Overall, it found that: *The Council is strengthening its arrangements for asset management and recognises that there are opportunities to use the sustainable development principle more to improve this work and that performance management of assets could be improved.*

Procurement

- We have addressed the key findings, highlighting good practice and recommendations from the ‘*Procuring well-being in Wales*’ report (published 25/02/2021) from the Office of Future Generations Commissioner for Wales [procuring-well-being-in-wales](https://www.futuregenerations.wales/procuring-well-being-in-wales).



- We have amended our Sustainable Risk Assessment (SRA) template which ensures that the sustainability issues such as environmental, social, economic & cultural issues can be factored into the specification for individual tenders to incorporate elements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. We also include service provision information relating to the 5 ways of working i.e. Long Term, Prevention, Integration, Collaboration & Involvement. We have produced an Ethical Employment in Supply Chains Policy and drafted the Council’s first annual written statement on the steps taking during the financial year to ensure that slavery and human trafficking are not taking place in our organisation and our supply chains.

Risks

- The Corporate Risk Register is reported to the Governance and Audit Committee every 6 months and is reviewed by the Corporate Management Team every quarter as part of the performance management information and in line with the Well-being of Future Generations Act. We use a “**Web Based Risk Register Software**”, which allows Departments to input, access, maintain and manage both Corporate, Service and Project Risks.



A TIC review that concluded in December 2021 noted that ‘*Although the COVID-19 pandemic initially impacted on the ability to progress the recommendations contained within the Audit Office Review and follow-up Internal Audit Review, a number of key actions have now been implemented and good progress has been made across the action plan in general.*’

Is anyone better off?

 <p>Sell2Wales</p> <p>Sell2Wales All our procurement opportunities over £25K are listed on the Sell2Wales website.</p>	 <p>Community Benefits Community Benefits in Public Sector Procurement ensures that wider social, economic and environmental issues are taken into account in our tendering activity.</p>	 <p>Find a Tender Service Find a Tender Service (FTS) is free to use and displays information on public sector contract opportunities in the UK.</p>	 <p>Busnes Cymru Business Wales</p> <p>Business Wales Business Wales can help small or medium sized enterprise SME (employing up to 250), who want to improve their chances of winning public and private sector contracts.</p>	 <p>Terms and Conditions These terms and conditions set out the basis of the relationship between the Council and the successful supplier.</p>
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Business is about people

We value our diverse range of suppliers and acknowledge the importance of having access to a quality and diverse supplier base, recognising that **business is about people by talking to them, listening to them, and understanding them**. To this aim we have held 7 Live Tender Webinars virtually via Teams with a total of 164 suppliers in attendance over the last financial year. The aim of these sessions was to inform prospective tenderers of the forthcoming tendering opportunities and the requirements of these service/goods.

We also understand that the prospect of tendering for business with us can sometimes appear to be a daunting task. Therefore, we have actively engaged with 63 suppliers through a series of first point of contact sessions (1-2-1 meetings) over the same period, engaging with suppliers who are interested in working with the Council.

A Meet the Buyer Event was organised by the appointed main contractor Bouygues for the Pentre Awel Zone 1 Development and was held at Parc y Scarlets, Llanelli. A total of 107 suppliers/contractors attended the event throughout the day with Procurement and Community Benefits Officers representing the Corporate Procurement Unit at the event. This Meet the Buyer event was aimed at giving opportunity to second tier, local suppliers to learn of potential sub-contracting opportunities.

We have developed a Supplier Guide for current and potential contractors, suppliers, and providers with the aim to help provide organisations who want to work with us a clear understanding of how to bid for contracts and what is required during the quotation or tendering process. This is now available electronically and appears on our website [Supplier Guide to Tendering \(gov.wales\)](#). It contains a variety of helpful information, advice, and guidance in relation to procurement and “How to Tender” with Carmarthenshire County Council.

Supplier Guide to Tendering

In this section

- 1. Introduction
- 2. What do we spend our money on?
- 3. Where and with whom is our money spent?
- 4. How We Buy
- 5. What rules, regulations & procurement procedures do we follow?
- 6. How does the tendering process work?
- 7. Where do we advertise our contract opportunities
- 8. What is included in a Tender document/package?
- 9. The Dos and Don'ts of Tendering
- 10. Supplier Engagement Events
- 11. Getting Ready to Tender
- 12. Procurement Glossary
- 13. Advice and Support

What and how we can do better

Our delivery plan to achieve this objective

Ref	Actions and Measures	Date/Target	Owner/Resp. Officer
A	Financial Planning		
1	Use of the Council's reserves to invest in the County and support future development (Moving forward in Carmarthenshire) <i>16063</i>	March 2023	Chris Moore /Randal Hemingway
2	Ensure the Council manages its budgets effectively and prudently (Moving forward in Carmarthenshire) <i>16064</i>	March 2023	Chris Moore /Randal Hemingway
3	We will undertake the closure and Audit of the Accounts within the appropriate timescales <i>16061</i>	June 2023	Chris Moore /Randal Hemingway
B	Assets		
1	We will commence work on the transformation of the former Debenhams Store to provide a multi service hub covering health, education and leisure	March 2023	Jason Jones/ Stuart Walters
2	Delivery of Phase 1 Pentre Awel providing business, research, education, community healthcare and modern leisure facilities <i>15155+12985</i>	March 2023	Jason Jones/ Steffan HG Jenkins
3	We will apply and embed the sustainable development principle in the way it plans, delivers and monitors the management of its assets # Audit Wales Recommendation -Springing Forward <i>16136</i>	March 2023	Jason Jones/ Stephen Morgan
4	<i>We will improve the performance management of our assets.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing a set of performance and outcome measures that reflect the Council's ambitions for its assets and monitor these measures at a corporate level, including reporting to overview and scrutiny committee benchmarking performance on asset management with other organisations # Audit Wales Recommendation-Springing Forward <i>16137</i>	March 2023	Jason Jones/ Stephen Morgan
5	We will review and formally adopt the Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan by March 2023 <i>15541</i>	March 2023	Jason Jones/ Stephen Morgan
C	Procurement		
1	We will work with departments to deliver compliant tender exercises through the implementation of a category management approach. <i>15286</i>	March 2023	Chris Moore /Helen Pugh /Clare Jones & Gemma Clutterbuck
2	We will continue to develop our approach to early engagement of Local Businesses. <i>15288</i>	March 2023	Chris Moore /Helen Pugh /Clare Jones & Gemma Clutterbuck
D	Risks		
1	Continue to implement the action plans developed in response to the WAO/Internal Audit Review, with priority to be given to ensuring that the Risk Toolkit is formally adopted and used to inform development sessions for managers at a divisional level and dedicated development sessions for Departmental Risk Champions. <i>15292 (Sub Actions: 14302, 14303 & 16040)</i>	March 2023	Chris Moore /Helen Pugh /Julie Standeven



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

APPENDICES



Statutory Requirements

Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015

The general purpose of the Act, is to ensure that the governance arrangements of public bodies for improving the well-being of Wales, take the needs of future generations into account. The Act is designed to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with sustainable development principles. The law states that: -

- a) We must carry out sustainable development, improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The sustainable development principle is ***'... the public body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'***
- b) We must demonstrate use of the 5 ways of working: Long term, integrated, involving, collaborative and preventative
- c) We must work towards achieving all of the 7 national well-being goals in the Act. Together they provide a shared vision for public bodies to work towards.



The Well-being of Future Generations Act, provides a shared vision for all public bodies in Wales to work towards. As a public body subject to the Act we are required to set and publish Well-being Objectives that maximise our Contribution to the Well-being Goals.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

The **Local Government and Elections Wales Act 2021** provides for the establishment of a new and reformed legislative framework for local government elections, democracy, governance and performance. It replaces the Local Government Measure 2009. [Part 6 of the Act outlines new duties in respect of Performance and Governance of Principal Councils](#) and includes specific duties for the Council:

- Duty to keep performance under review;
- Duty to consult on performance;
- Duty to report on performance – based on self-assessment approach;
- Duty to arrange a panel performance assessment;
- Duty to respond to a panel performance assessment report.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires that a Council must produce a self-assessment report in respect of each financial year. The report must set out its conclusions on the extent to which it met the performance requirements during that financial year, and any actions it intends to take, or has already taken, to increase the extent to which it is meeting the performance requirements

The performance requirements are the extent to which:

- we are exercising our functions effectively.
- we are using our resources economically, efficiently and effectively.
- our governance is effective for securing the above.

How our Well-being Objectives contribute to National Well-being Goals

Carmarthenshire's 2021/22 Well-being Objectives			7 National Well-being Goals						
			Prosperity	Resilience	Healthier	More equal	Cohesive Communities	Vibrant culture & Welsh Language	Global responsibility
Start Well	1	Help to give every child the best start in life and improve their early life experiences.	✓		✓	✓	✓		
	2	Help children live healthy lifestyles	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	3	Support and improve progress, achievement and outcomes for all learners	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Live Well	4	Tackle poverty by doing all we can to prevent it, help people into work and improve the lives of those living in poverty	✓		✓	✓	✓		
	5	Create more jobs and growth throughout the county	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	6	Increase the availability of rented and affordable homes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	7	Help people live healthy lives (tackling risky behaviour & obesity)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Age Well	8	Support community cohesion, resilience and safety	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	9	Support older people to age well and maintain dignity and independence in their later years	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	10	Look after the environment now and for the future	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
In a Healthy, Safe & Prosperous Environment	11	Improve the highway and transport infrastructure and connectivity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	12	Promoting Welsh Language and Culture	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
	13	Better Governance and Use of Resources	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

**Success
measures for
our Well-being
Objectives**

Details and explanation of performance for each of these success measures can be found under the relevant Well-being Objective in this report.

The Result column is based on the two most recent years results.

Wellbeing Objectives and Success Measures	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Result	
WBO1 - Best Start in Life								
Children in care who had to move 3 or more times <i>(PAM/029)</i>	9.2%	8.8%	10.4%	8.6%	4.7%	6.6%	Declined	
WBO2 - Children - Healthy Lifestyles								
Childhood obesity <i>(Child Measurement Programme NHS)</i>	29.4%	26.6%	30.4%				Declined	
WBO3 - Support and improve progress, achievement, and outcomes for all learners								
Educational attainment - Average Capped 9 points score <i>(Year 11 pupils) (PAM/032)</i>			363.1	367.2			Improved	
School attendance rates (Primary) <i>(PAM/007)</i>	94.8%	94.4%	93.9%	93.9%			Same	
School attendance rates (Secondary) <i>(PAM/008)</i>	94.5%	94.3%	93.8%	93.5%			Declined	
Satisfaction with child's primary school <i>(NSW)</i>	93%	90%	84%	95%			Improved	
Number of leavers Not in Education, Employment or Training <i>(NEETs)</i>	Year 11 <i>(PAM/009)</i>	2.1%	1.4%	1.8%	1.5%	1.8%	1.1%	Improved
	Year 13 <i>(5.1.0.2)</i>	2.0%	3.0%	4.9%		3.5%	2.7%	Improved
WBO4- Tackle Poverty								
Gap in the Average Capped 9 points score (Year 11 pupils) for those eligible for Free School Meals and those who are not eligible <i>(NWBI)</i>			19.7%	17.9%			Improved	
Households successfully prevented from becoming homeless <i>(PAM/012)</i>	64%	65.1%	59.4%	46.4%	46.4%	50.5%	Improved	
Households in material deprivation <i>(NWBI)</i>	15.3%	15.8%	13.5%	11.3%		12.0%	Declined	
Households Living in Poverty <i>(CACI's 'PayCheck' Data)</i>			35.5%	33.7%	33.8%	35.6%	Declined	
WBO5 - Creating Jobs and Growth								
Employment figures <i>(ONS – Annual Population Survey) (NWBI)</i>	75.2%	73.7%	71.6%	71.7%	68.1%	69.6%	Improved	
Average Gross weekly pay <i>(ONS – Annual Survey of hours and earnings)</i>	£494.5	£517.8	£511.3	£536.2	£574.5	£566.9	Declined	
Number qualified to NVQ Level 4 or above <i>(Stats Wales) (NWBI)</i>	37.4%	37.8%	38.0%	41.4%	39.9%	37.7%	Declined	
People moderately or very satisfied with their jobs <i>(NSW) (NWBI)</i>	80.0%	82.5%		78.9%			Declined	
WBO6 - Affordable Homes								
Number of affordable homes in the County <i>(7.3.2.24)</i>	173	235	247	315	158	308	Improved	
WBO7 - Healthy Lives								
Adults who say their general health is Good or Very Good <i>(NSW)</i>		69.0%	66.0%	69.6%	69.7%	68.6%	Declined	
Adults who say they have a longstanding illness <i>(NSW)</i>		50.0%	53.0%	50.5%	51.2%	40.1%	Improved	
Adult mental well-being score <i>(NSW) (NWBI) (score out of 70)</i>	50.2		51.1			48.8	Declined	
Adults who have two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours <i>(NSW) (NWBI) (Not smoking, drinking < 14 units or lower, eating 5 portions fruit & veg the previous day, having a healthy body mass index, being physically active at least 150 minutes the previous week).</i>		91.8%	91.2%	87.6%		92.4%	Improved	

Details and explanation of performance for each of these success measures can be found under the relevant Well-being Objective in this report.

The Result column is based on the two most recent years results

Wellbeing Objectives and Success Measures	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Result
WBO8 - Community cohesion, resilience & safety							
% Say they have a sense of community (NSW)(NWBI) (Derived from feeling of belonging; different backgrounds get on, treat with respect'.)	47.7%		51.6%		68.6%	68.0%	Declined
People feeling safe (NSW)(NWBI) (At home, walking in the local area, and travelling)	76.9%		76.1%		74.6%	66.7%	Declined
WBO9 - Older people to age well							
Agree there's a good Social Care Service available in the area (NSW)	56.2%		47.5%		66.0%		Improved
Number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant (PAM/015)	167 days	161 days	157 days	176 days	347days	259 days	Improved
People who are lonely (NSW)(NWBI)	17.1%	16.6%		17.3%		15.4%	Improved
WBO10 - Look after the environment							
Renewable energy generated (kWh)	670,400 kWh	937,330 kWh	979,071 kWh	997,480 kWh	1,059,364 kWh		Not available at time of publication
Council's Energy Consumption (kWh)			69,059,743 kWh	70,332,391 kWh	63,684,340 kWh		Improved
Rates of recycling (PAM/030)	66.23%	63.64%	58.95%	64.66%	66.08%	61.68%	Declined
WBO11 - Highways & Transport							
Road conditions (PAM/020) A Roads	4.3%	4.1%	5.2%	5.4%	4.1%	3.6%	Improved
(PAM/021) B Roads	3.5%	3.1%	4.2%	4.7%	3.4%	2.8%	Improved
(PAM/022) C Roads	11.6%	11.9%	12.5%	12.5%	12.0%	11.7%	Improved
Road casualties (5.5.2.21)	102	83	97	111	55	81	Declined
WBO12 - Promote Welsh Language & Culture							
Can speak Welsh (NSW)(NWBI)	40.1%	43.6%	37.8%	37.4%		41.6%	Improved
People attended arts events in Wales in last year (NSW)	69.3%	67.4%		68.3%			Improved
People visited historic places in Wales in last year (NSW)	63.8%	64.7%		68.7%			Improved
People visited museums in Wales in last year (NSW)	36.0%	34.6%		42.1%			Improved
WBO13 - Better Governance and use of Resources							
'Do it online' payments	29,020	34,494	39,321	46,044	53,454	56,582	Improved
People agree that they can access information about the Authority in the way they would like to. (NSW)		70.8%	72.4%	71.2%			Declined
People know how to find what services the Council provides (NSW)		71.9%	72.1%	74.6%			Improved
People agree they have an opportunity to participate in making decisions about the running of local authority services. (NSW)		11.4%		9.0%		35.5%	Improved
Staff sickness absence levels (PAM/001)	10.8 days	10.1 days	9.8 days	10.7 days	7.7 days	11.4 days	Declined
People agree that the Council asks for their views before setting its budget. (NSW)		8.0%	11.3%	9.9%			Declined

2021/22 National Survey for Wales

The following are results of the 2021/22 National Survey for Wales that are currently available at local authority level, but not all of these are attributable to the Councils performance.

Where the same question was asked in a previous survey, the table below shows whether we have improved our performance and our rank position.

In AR	Questions asked in the 2021/22 National Survey for Wales and available at Local Authority level NWBI - National Well-being Indicator	Has our result improved			Worst results												Best Results									
		Previous available result	2021/22 survey result	Improved ↑ Standstill ↔ Declined ↓	22 nd	21 st	20 th	19 th	18 th	17 th	16 th	15 th	14 th	13 th	12 th	11 th	10 th	9 th	8 th	7 th	6 th	5 th	4 th	3 rd	2 nd	1 st
					Arrows start from our previous position												to our 2021/22 position									
1 ✓	% Agree that they have an opportunity to participate in making decisions about the running of local authority services.	9.0	35.5	↑	18.0																					38.5
2 ✓	% Who feel able to influence decisions affecting their local areas (NWBI/23)	18.8	31.6	↑	14.6																					33.4
3	% Say they have access to good services and facilities (NWBI/24) <i>(within a 15 to 20 minute walk from home)</i>	91.0	85.2	↓	72.5																					92.1
4	% Satisfied with their ability to get to local services they need	79.6	85.2	↑	72.5																					92.1
5	% Satisfied that good services and facilities are available in their local area (15 to 20 minute walk from home).	64.4	65.8	↑	48.6																					86.9
6	% Satisfied with local area as a place to live (NWBI/26)	88.4	90.3	↑	68.5																					96.4
7 ✓	% of adults who can speak Welsh (NWBI/37)	37.4	41.6	↑	Below 8.2																					68.8
8	% of adults who speak Welsh daily and can speak more than just a few words (NWBI/36)	30.4	32.1	↑	Below 5.4																					60.4
9	% of adults who can understand spoken Welsh	50.3	60.1	↑	12.2																					80.5
10	% of adults who can read Welsh	38.9	46.0	↑	Below 10.4																					69.1
11	% of adults who can write Welsh	35.2	41.9	↑	Below 9.5																					66.6
12 ✓	% of households with internet access*	92.7	91.5	↓	87.0																					94.9
13	% that used the internet (including Smart TV and handheld devices)	92.4	91.3	↓	89.4																					96.7

In AR	Questions asked in the 2021/22 National Survey for Wales and available at Local Authority level NWBI - National Well-being Indicator	Has our result improved			22 nd	21 st	20 th	19 th	18 th	17 th	16 th	15 th	14 th	13 th	12 th	11 th	10 th	9 th	8 th	7 th	6 th	5 th	4 th	3 rd	2 nd	1 st
		Previous available result	2021/22 survey result	Improved ↑ Standstill ↔ Declined ↓	Worst results											Best Results										
		Arrows start from our previous position											to our 2021/22 position													
14	% that accomplished 5 digital skills in past 3 months**	73.1	72.0	↓	67.0																					83.7
15	% of people participating in any sport or physical activity	62.6	56.7	↓	43.4																					66.3
16	% of people participating in sporting activities three or more times a week (NWBI/38)	35.1	35.2	↑	22.3																					42.6
17 ✓	% of people feeling safe at home, walking in the local area, and when travelling (NWBI/25)	74.6	66.7	↓	46.6																					85.0
18	% of people feeling safe at home after dark	96.8	95.3	↓	90.5																					99.0
19	% of people feeling safe in local area after dark	84.4	80.7	↓	58.7																					89.9
20	% of people feeling safe on public transport after dark	82.5	76.2	↓	59.7																					89.9
21	% of people feeling safe travelling by car after dark	96.6	97.3	↑	95.1																					99.4
22 ✓	% of people who agree that there is good community cohesion in their local area (NWBI/27)	68.6	68.0	↓	38.9																					77.6
23	% of people felt that they belonged to their local area	84.6	81.5	↓	70.6																					89.4
24 ✓	% of people who are lonely (NWBI/30)	17.3	15.4	↑	17.8																					7.0
25	Average satisfaction score for the education system in Wales (scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is 'extremely bad' and 10 is 'extremely good')	6.0	6.9	↑	6.0																					7.2
26	% of people that have any plans to start an education or training course in the next three years	23.1	23.2	↑	16.9																					33.8
27	% of people that contacted their local councillor in the past 12 months. (i.e. with an enquiry, complaint or problem)	12.9	15.7	↑	10.0																					24.2

In AR	Questions asked in the 2021/22 National Survey for Wales and available at Local Authority level NWBI - National Well-being Indicator	Has our result improved			22 nd	21 st	20 th	19 th	18 th	17 th	16 th	15 th	14 th	13 th	12 th	11 th	10 th	9 th	8 th	7 th	6 th	5 th	4 th	3 rd	2 nd	1 st		
		Previous available result	2021/22 survey result	Improved ↑ Standstill ↔ Declined ↓	Worst results												Best Results											
					Arrows start from our previous position												● ● to our 2021/22 position ■											
28	% of people agreed their local councillor worked closely with their community.	new question	38.8	new question	25.3																					58.1		
29	% of people with a good understanding of what their local councillor does for their local community.	new question	40.3	new question	32.6																					59.0		
30 ✓	% of people who say their general health was Good or Very Good	69.7	68.6	↓	64.1																					79.3		
31 ✓	% of adults who say they have a longterm illness	51.2	40.1	↑	41.1																					26.9		
32 ✓	% of adults who have 2 or more healthy behaviours <small>not smoking / not drinking above weekly guidelines / eating five or more portions of fruit and vegetables the previous day / physically active for at least 150 minutes in the previous week / maintaining a healthy weight/body mass index</small>	87.6	92.4	↑	83.1																					97.5		
33	% of adults who smoke	16.2	15.7	↑	19.8																					6.3		
34	% of adults who are a E-Cigarette user	6.7	6.4	↑	10.3																					0.9		
35	% of adults who drink more than 14 units	21.5	15.1	↑	23.3																					8.9		
36	% of adults who eat more than 5 portions of fruit and vegetable	21.7	33.5	↑	14.3																					42.4		
37	% of adults who are active for more than 150 minutes a week	55.6	64.8	↑	38.3																					69.5		
38	% of adults who are active for less than 30 minutes a week	27.6	21.7	↑	50.1																					17.3		
39	% of adults who are overweight or obese (BMI 25+)	63.6	68.2	↓	79.9																					50.0		
40	% of adults who are obese (BMI 30+)	28.2	28.4	↓	36.5																					17.9		
41 ✓	Adult Mental Well-being score <small>(NWBI/29) (Out of a maximum score of 70)</small>	51.1	48.8	↓	46.1																					51.6		

In AR	Questions asked in the 2021/22 National Survey for Wales and available at Local Authority level NWBI - National Well-being Indicator	Has our result improved			22 nd	21 st	20 th	19 th	18 th	17 th	16 th	15 th	14 th	13 th	12 th	11 th	10 th	9 th	8 th	7 th	6 th	5 th	4 th	3 rd	2 nd	1 st	
		Previous available result	2021/22 survey result	Improved ↑ Standstill ↔ Declined ↓	Worst results												Best Results										
				Arrows start from our previous position												to our 2021/22 position											
42	✓	% of Households in material deprivation (NWBI/19)	11.3	12.0	↓	14.1																					7.1
<p>* Households with internet access - NOTE - The 2021/22 survey was based on a sample of 12,500 in Wales compared to a far smaller sample in 2020/21 of just 3,500, which may well have affected the result.</p> <p>** 5 digital skills are 1. Being safe and legal online; 2. Problem solving; 3. Transacting; 4. Communicating; 5. Handling information and content)</p>																											

Regulatory Reports 2021/22

Several regulatory reports were issued during the last twelve months.

- There are some local reports that are specific to Carmarthenshire, these are noted in **bold** below.
- National / Thematic reports are undertaken by regulators to look at all councils in Wales (in an integrated programme of work consulted and agreed upon with local government) to identify best practice.
 - Most of these reports contain recommendations. Sometimes the recommendations are for Welsh Government and / or local government or other stakeholders.
 - Not all recommendations contained in reports may apply to Carmarthenshire as in some instances we could be the area of best practice proposed, be already doing what is identified or it may be, just not be applicable.

The following list of regulatory reports were issued during the last twelve months:



August 2021	<u>Review of Planning Services Carmarthenshire County Council</u>
September 2021	<u>Review of Waste Services Carmarthenshire County Council</u>
September 2021	<u>Regenerating Town Centres</u>
September 2021	<u>A Picture of Public Services</u>
September 2021	<u>A picture of local government</u>
October 2021	<u>A Picture of Higher and Further Education</u>
October 2021	<u>A Picture of Schools</u>
September 2021	<u>Financial Sustainability of Local Government – COVID Impact, Recovery & Future Challenges</u>
November 2021	<u>Carmarthenshire County Council – Financial Sustainability Assessment</u>
November 2021	<u>WG Cosy homes programme</u>
December 2021	<u>Commissioning Care Homes for Older People</u>
January 2022	<u>Emergency Services in Wales Collaboration</u>
January 2022	<u>Annual Audit Summary</u>
April 2022	<u>Direct Payments</u>



November 2021	<u>Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Assurance Check 2021: Carmarthenshire County Council</u>
May 2022	<u>Carmarthenshire County Council In-house domiciliary care service Inspection Report</u>

May 2021	<u>Turning learners into users of the Welsh Language – Effective Practice</u>
May 2021	<u>Creating a digital platform for the Welsh for Adults sector</u>
June 2021	<u>How schools and colleges used RRRS and catch-up grants for post 16 learners</u>
July 2021	<u>Summary of findings from our national thematic reviews 2020/21-Thematic Report</u>
July 2021	<u>The teaching of Welsh history including, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history, identity and culture</u>
Oct 2021	<u>Developing pupils social and emotional skills</u>
December 2021	<u>Supporting Resources</u> <u>We don't tell our teachers-Experiences of peer-on-peer sexual harassment among secondary school pupils</u>
January 2022	<u>All-age schools in Wales - A report on the challenges and successes of establishing all-age schools</u>
February 2022	<u>Summary of engagement calls and visits to schools and PRUs-autumn 2021</u>
February 2022	<u>Welsh Immersion Education - Strategies and approaches to support 3 to 11-year-old learners</u>
March 2022	<u>The curriculum for Wales-How are regional consortia and local authorities supporting schools?</u>
April 2022	<u>We don't tell teachers, but schools need to know – a report for learners</u>
May 2022	<u>Effective practice- Placing children at the centre of learning</u>

Performance Assessment on the extent to which we are:

- we are exercising our functions effectively;
- are using resources economically, efficiently and effectively; and
- our governance is effective for securing the above.

Under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 we have a duty keep under review the extent to which we are fulfilling the above 'performance requirements'

Our self-assessment uses the Well-being Objectives set out in the body of this report to give a more holistic view of Council performance.

However, we have also examined performance in a departmental manner to ensure a comprehensive assessment.

Chief Executive's Department

Duty to Keep Performance Under Review	<p style="text-align: center;">How well are we doing and how do we know?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">How can we do better? (see bullet points)</p>
Performance Requirements	
<p>1. <i>exercising functions effectively</i></p>	<p><u>Administration and Legal including Democratic Services</u></p> <p>The service has performed well during this period despite significant challenges. Officers have continued to work closely with and support their client departments and elected members</p> <p>The level of complaints received about the service continues to be very low.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of capacity for S106 agreements. Additional staff resources have been secured to address this. • Develop participation and petition scheme for Democratic Services <p><u>ICT and Corporate Policy</u></p> <p>Our first Digital Transformation Strategy 2017-2020 set out the Council's strategic digital priorities and aspirations and ensured that when the COVID-19 pandemic struck, we as an authority and our service were in a very strong position to respond and recover. Annual Reporting of the Digital Transformation Strategy shows good progress.</p> <p>Our work with the PSB has progressed well and a Well-being Assessment has been produced. Key Council Annual Reports in Equalities, Welsh Language and the overall Council's progress on Corporate Strategy show good progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT resource and capacity is limited to meet increasing demand for transformation. • More can be done with improving our Security (Cyber) and Disaster Recovery. • Continue to improve the approach to embedding integrated quarterly performance monitoring.

exercising
functions
effectively
(continued)

People Management

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

Our staff are encouraged to develop, and we are accredited with Investors in People.



One of the post-pandemic legacies, and a significant risk for the service, has been the Division's capacity to manage increased vacancy volumes and demand for our services, which has been compounded by Brexit.

There have been significant Social Care and Teaching recruitment problems.

Platinum Corporate Health accreditation and accredited to Occupational Health and Standards SEQHS.

A June 2022 Audit Wales report found that:

The Council is improving the strategic planning for its workforce and is taking action to address staff capacity issues in key service areas but recognises that performance monitoring of workforce management needs strengthening.

Springing Forward Workforce Management- Carmarthenshire County Council

- Develop a new People Strategy; ensuring that Learning & Development priorities and programmes are fully aligned with corporate priorities and needs.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated a move to agile working and it is intended that this will inform how the Council manages its workforce in the future
- Agree a suite of People Management Performance Measures and strengthen the sustainability principle.

Regeneration Division

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

- In each of the individual town centres, we will pass on the overseeing of the recovery to the stakeholders in the respective towns. Each of the plans highlight key issues and opportunities and provide a delivery framework of interventions specific to the town centres.

Business and Cabinet Support

The Business Unit continued to respond and contribute to the Authority's response to the pandemic in a pragmatic manner, ensuring all essential services to staff and Members were prioritised and provided, to ensure continuation of core services.

The Unit supported *all Gold Command meetings* for COVID-19 and major floodings. We have also supported the *Planning Assurance Board and Planning Intervention Board* who met weekly.

- As part of better ways of working, we will continue to work with business unit managers to further develop paperless processes and systems.
- Following the elections in May 2022, the Service is working with the incoming administration to develop a cabinet Vision Statement and agree member portfolios.

Electoral and Registrars

Both Electoral Services and Civil Registration are statutory services. The Registration Service includes the registration of births, deaths, stillbirths, marriages and civil partnerships, the provision of a certificate service and the provision of Citizenship Ceremonies. Electoral Services is responsible for the update and maintenance of the Register of Electors and the conduct of all elections relevant to Carmarthenshire. The work of the *Registration Service* has been under such continuous spotlight during the last year as we moved through the global pandemic. We successfully run elections.

- To determine if our opening times still meet customer trends and business needs by participating in relevant consultation with our customers, staff and key stakeholders to seek views that will help make a decision on service improvement.
- We will analyse our performance indicators, both internal and external.

Media and Marketing

The Media and Marketing service have again this year played a key role in supporting all divisions across the authority to effectively communicate in both Welsh and English relevant information to residents, businesses and stakeholders throughout the county ensuring consistency and relevancy across all communications

As well as additional external communications that has been required for us to publish, the team has delivered a wide range of additional internal communications to support staff who have had to change the way they work including a growing demand on simultaneous translation of all democratic virtual meetings.

The Hwb in Ammanford, Carmarthen and Llanelli offer pre-booked appointments and drop-in advice to an average 8,000 residents per month, as well as providing advice and access to training and employment support. This had to be taken forward in a different way during 2020/21 due to COVID19 restrictions and the establishments having to be closed. Customers have been able to contact online and telephone and virtual meetings have been held. The increasing use of Social Media has allowed open engagement and conversations with members of the public. In addition to this social media is an excellent tool for promoting council services.

We passed *the accessibility standard* for our website.

Key statistics for Council website 2021 / 2022:

- Pageviews: 6,144,228
- Sessions: 3,017,983

Key statistics for social media, email marketing and video:

- 19.3m Twitter reach
- 8.82m Facebook reach
- Published 3,259 posts
- Dealt with 4,055 'inbound' posts, enquiries via comments, written on our wall or sent as a direct message

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 53.3k link clicks - Facebook: New followers – 1,201. Total followers: 20,451 - Twitter: New followers – 372. Total followers 11,151 - 443,141 emails sent to MyAccount, businesses and 3rd sector. 267,018 unique opens. - Video – 115,800 views <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver the Council’s key principle of One Council, One Vision, One Voice. Moving forward the service will be driven by the priorities, services and activity outlined in the corporate plans and we will use our resources and focus our energy to meet these priorities. • Identify other services where the first of point of contact enquiries could be dealt with by Contact Centre/ adopt a Hwb approach
<p>2 <i>using resources economically, efficiently and effectively;</i></p>	<p><u>Administration and Legal including Democratic Services</u></p> <p>Legal Services use management data to identify where the service has a lack of capacity and if necessary, work is outsourced.</p> <p>The service ensures decisions are taken through the democratic process in a timely manner. A new integrated impact assessment and committee report template is being development and will be rolled out in 2022.</p> <p>Regulatory reports on Scrutiny and Audit Committee effectiveness have been addressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop a set of key performance indicators for the Legal Services and Land Charges service <p><u>ICT and Corporate Policy</u></p> <p>We produce an Annual Report on our Digital Transformation Strategy to ensure resources are being used effectively. ICT will underpin Better Ways of Working initiatives.</p> <p>Our Annual Reports on Equalities and Welsh Language Standards demonstrate good progress in these areas.</p> <p>Our Annual Report on our Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives had a certificate of compliance from our regulators Audit Wales.</p> <p>A Performance Management Framework was introduced, and we commissioned the WLGA to undertake a review of our Performance Requirements preparedness which identified areas for improvement.</p> <p>We developed a more integrated performance monitoring report adding a wider range of evidence to the process.</p> <p>We also improved engagement and assurance arrangements for Departmental and Divisional Business Plans.</p> <p>Internal Audit found our Performance arrangements Acceptable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny feedback requested more measures and SMARTER action planning • We want to make better use of data and information, and as a result we have set up a <i>Data Insight Team</i> to become a more data driven organisation. • We will address the recommendations of the WLGA review of our self-assessment arrangements. • We will improve engagement and consultation on our self- assessment arrangements.

- We will further develop our quarterly integrated performance monitoring arrangements and our engagement and assurance arrangements for business planning.

People Management

96 members of staff provide people management support to the entire organisation (in the region of 8,500 employees)

The Council Sickness figure at the end of 2021/22 of 11.4 FTE days is 3.7 days higher than last year and above the 2019/20 Welsh average of 11.2 FTE days (Authority 2019/20 performance was 10.74 FTE days). This is our highest sickness figure since 2008/09 (11.7 days) However, it is important to note that this has been impacted by COVID-19 related sickness absence, which accounted for 2 FTE days per employee during 2021/22

The causes of absence are monitored, and the impact and legacy of COVID-19 continues.

The Council continues to support its lowest paid employees and workers by continuing to pay the Real Living Wage supplement this supports our Tackling Poverty Well-being Objective.

- Develop a Transformation Strategy building on the Better Ways of Working Project to improve economic use of resources, Value for Money, productivity, working lives and customer focus.
- Further improve our recruitment processes via new integrated recruitment IT system. (IIP)
- We will evaluate the employee experience and undertake research to develop a Workforce Engagement Strategy that will underpin the new workforce strategy
- We will developing proactive more preventative solutions such as promoting good health and educating employees on healthy lifestyle choices.
- Further support and encourage Workforce Planning in Departments
- Develop performance measures

Regeneration Division

More than 1,100 jobs have already been created and over 700 jobs safeguarded We have awarded contracts to local businesses, providing skilled work opportunities in the local economy and safeguarding jobs

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

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

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

% of people in employment -	UK: 74.7%	Wales: 72.2%	Carmarthenshire: 68.6%
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Pentre Awel part-funded by the Swansea Bay City Deal - brings together business, research, education, community healthcare and modern leisure facilities all at one prime location along the Llanelli coastline. As well as improving health and well-being, the project will create almost 2,000 jobs.

- We will continue to focus on supporting 3,000 people into work, providing 2,000 additional homes, maximising the community benefit of development schemes and supporting businesses to take advantage of key grants
- Moving forward the RLSP will continue to work with Employers across the region to ensure that the RLSP inform Welsh Government what skills are required in the region and where WG funding needs to be allocated in order to fulfil the skills demands identified by employers

Business and Cabinet Support

Working on the forward work programme for Corporate Management Team ensuring reports are tabled at the appropriate timings and in line with the democratic committee cycle.

The Unit proactively supports managers within a number of functions, such as HR processes, financial regulations, procurement

- Produce a forward work programme for Corporate Management Team (CMT).

Electoral and Registration

Under the governance arrangements, Carmarthenshire Registration Service is committed to the service delivery standards developed by the General Register Office (GRO) and adheres to good practice guidance and the codes of practice. GRO guidance provides information on specific national standards the Local Authority must meet together with aspirational standards

Follow up discussions with the General Register Office Compliance Officers have confirmed that Carmarthenshire Registration Service continues to deliver services to an excellent level.

- To take all opportunities to engage, contribute and support the retention of the current easements continuing with regards death registration being enabled by telephone and electronic transmission of documents.
- To build upon and strengthen the partnerships established during the pandemic i.e. hospitals, Medical Examiners, Funeral Directors, Coroner, health board and our mass fatalities project group to ensure we meet our statutory duty and to support bereaved families through their registration journey.

Media and Marketing

The additional demand on customer services during the past 12 months has been dramatic. It has been challenging to deliver a service due to the increase in service demand. It has been inevitable that there has been an increase in waiting times and number of abandoned calls.

New processes and further discussions with specific services are taking place to reduce this as best we can. Recruitment has proved to be difficult, and we continue to look for additional staff to join the team to build resilience into the staffing structure.

The team also successfully trialled standby arrangement to assist with communication outside of normal working hours. This has been critical during recent events

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Media and Marketing team will restructure to ensure the service can deliver and achieve the communication and marketing needs of the Authority and build on the high-class service to its internal and external customers. • Pushout and enhance the ‘<i>claim what’s your service</i>’ and develop a consistent approach within the Council to ensure all services manage customers with financial and well-being concerns in the same manner to avoid confusion and to build confidence and clarity. • Develop New Social Media performance indicator
<p>3. <i>governance is effective for securing the above</i></p>	<p><u>Administration and Legal including Democratic Services</u></p> <p>The Corporate Governance Group ensures the Code of Governance is adhered to and produces an Annual Governance Statement as part of the Statement of Accounts.</p> <p>The Constitutional Review Working Group ensures the Constitution and its development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previously the AGS outline the governance arrangements in place. This year we have questioned how good these arrangements are, how we know and how we can do better. We will review how this process has gone <p><u>ICT and Corporate Policy</u></p> <p>We have begun enhanced business plan challenge through Engagement and Assurance Process.</p> <p>A significant part our Annual Governance Statement (AGS) evaluates our Corporate Policy and Performance Management Arrangements</p> <p>Steering Groups for both Poverty and Rural Carmarthenshire give direction and oversight to key priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to enhance business plan format and engagement and assurance. • Strengthen links between AGS and performance reporting - approach and content. • As the Corporate Strategy and Well-being Objectives are identified we will ensure the creation of appropriate steering groups/advisory panels to ensure direction and progress • Address Internal Audit findings on Performance Management. <p><u>People Management</u></p> <p>Our People Strategy Steering Group provides oversight of People Management Strategy.</p> <p>The Transformation Strategy will provide the key driver to ensure arrangements are delivered.</p> <p>The TIC programme Board Terms of Reference will be reviewed, and governance arrangements strengthened.</p> <p>A significant part our Annual Governance Statement (AGS) evaluates our People Management Function.</p> <p>The IIP accreditation provides Quality Assurance on our processes.</p> <p>Our annual equal pay audit does not suggest any evidence of discrimination within</p>

the pay structures

Frequent Internal Audit reviews

Significant role in supporting Corporate Safeguarding

Employee Well-being Annual Report to CMT every year

- Using existing governance arrangements (People Strategy Steering Group) we will need to review our workforce strategy in light of the pandemic to support the organisation to recover.
- We are starting to see a significant increase in the number of occupational health referrals, in particular referrals to our Well-being Support Services. To stem this increase we need to invest more time in developing proactive preventative solutions such as promoting good health and educating employees on healthy lifestyle choices.

Regeneration Division

A business, economy and community recovery group was established to coordinate development and delivery of actions aligned to our economic recovery and delivery plan (ERP) and an overarching advisory group, comprising key private sector industry leaders, was also established.

A dashboard was set up to monitor the delivery of our 'Economic Recovery Plan'

- For each of the individual town centres, we will manage the overseeing of the recovery plans passing responsibility to the stakeholders in the respective towns. Each of the plans highlight key issues and opportunities and provide a delivery framework of interventions specific to the town centres.

Business and Cabinet Support

CMT & Cabinet support feedback

Electoral and Registrars

The Council is committed to delivering the service in accordance with the Good Practice Guide with achievement to National Standard as a minimum. All Key Performance Indicators for both Statutory Standards and Operational Delivery Standards within the guide are measured. Achievement is reported to General Register Office (GRO) in the Annual Performance Report.

Electoral Services are required to comply with the National electoral register data matching test then analyse results and act upon those results. The Electoral Administration Act 2006 gave the Electoral Commission powers to set and monitor performance standards for electoral services.

- To discharge the Council's increasing statutory responsibilities, required by Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and future proposed electoral reform, within the context of extraordinary financial constraints.

Media and Marketing

Profiled within AGS Para 2.3.2.4 *Ensuring External Communications* (under the principle of

Openness and engagement - *Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement*).

Duty to Consult	
<p><i>Consultation on assessment of performance?</i></p>	<p><u>ICT and Corporate Policy</u> Consultation as part of well-being assessment.</p> <p>Residents Survey undertaken.</p> <p>Complaint's feedback</p> <p>When available the Authority makes extensive use of the annual <i>National Survey for Wales</i> commissioned by Welsh Government. The results are used to help the Authority in its self-assessment of services and are included in our Annual Report. However, parts of this survey has been accepted by COVID-19 Pandemic and the same level of detail is not as available as in previous years</p> <p><u>People Management</u> Corporate Employee Relations Forum - last year, we doubled the amount of paid facilities time we offered to our recognised Trade Unions and have continued to consult regularly with Union colleagues on a range of policies and other areas</p> <p>Staff survey undertaken June-August 2022 with a section on performance.</p> <p><u>Regeneration Division</u> We engaged with over 1,000 businesses to gather evidence on the impact of the pandemic on our businesses</p> <p><u>Electoral and Registrars</u> The Registration Service regularly asks customers to complete satisfaction surveys so that we can understand what is working well and meeting expectation and what isn't working well and could be improved upon</p> <p>Elections worked collectively with the Association of Electoral Administrators, Electoral Commission, Cabinet Office and Welsh Government to deliver a safe and fair election in May 2021. An elections project group was established that ensured all elements of the election planning was controlled and shared by key players.</p> <p><u>Media and Marketing</u> Evidence suggests that there has been an increase in participation of online consultations. Specifically, when evaluating comparable consultations. For example, the Welsh in Education strategic plan consultation in 2017 received 21 completes whilst in 2021 the consultation received 854. Additionally, a recent Housing and regeneration masterplan received 2,522 completed surveys in comparison to 189 in a similar survey run in 2018. The increase in participation is attributed to the closer relationship developed with the Media and Marketing team ensuring that consultations are promoted on social media and corporate website and are sent to all key stakeholders. But we plan to resume full analysis when available</p>

Corporate Services Department

Duty to Keep Performance Under Review	<p style="text-align: center;">How well are we doing and how do we know?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">How can we do better?</p>
Performance Requirements	
<p>1. <i>exercising functions effectively</i></p>	<p>The review of the effectiveness of the system of Internal Control and Governance arrangements is informed by the work of the Internal Auditors on which the Authority gains assurance. Internal Audit is required to undertake its work in accordance with the standards as set out in the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) established in 2013 are the agreed professional standards for Internal Audit in Local Government.</p> <p>The overall opinion is that the Authority has an ‘Acceptable’ control environment in operation. There are clear Governance arrangements with defined Management responsibilities and Committee Structures in place, Risk Management and the control framework is generally sound and operated reasonably consistently. The Authority has an established Constitution, has developed Policies and approved Financial Procedure Rules and Contract Procedure Rules that provide advice and guidance to all staff and members. Sufficient assurance work has been carried out to form a reasonable conclusion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority’s internal control environment. Where weaknesses have been identified through reviews, Internal Audit have worked with management to agree appropriate corrective actions and a timescale for improvement.</p> <p>Strategic and Annual Audit Plans were presented to Governance and Audit Committee in the March meetings. Quarterly updates are provided on the work carried out and the Annual Report is presented every July. Actions to deliver recommendations made in 2018 Quality Assessment are complete.</p> <p>We could consider any improvements identified through the external assessment of Internal Audits arrangements. We are introducing new performance indicators for 2022/23 with the aim to assisting the service in becoming more efficient.</p>
<p>2. <i>using resources economically, efficiently and effectively;</i></p>	<p>The 2020/21 budget monitoring has probably been the most complicated ever due to value and all-pervasive impact of COVID-19 on services. We have claimed over £27 million from Welsh Government via hardship claims to support additional COVID-19 services and have also claimed £4.5 million relation to claims for loss of income. Corporate Services has risen to the challenge to support departmental spending decisions, the claims through the Welsh Government hardship scheme, as well as the identification of possible ineligible expenditure - this picture has evolved through the year with both changing nature of the pandemic as well as greater clarity over hardship scheme rules.</p> <p>We have continued to investigate and develop new ways of working which will result in delivering an even more efficient and effective service. We have been working closely with the Transform, Innovate and Change (TIC) team in their agreed 6 strategic areas of work (Income, Expenditure, Digital Transformation, Demands and waste, Service improvement, Supporting transformation & change in Schools and Supporting Better Ways of Working). As part of the Income strategic area our</p>

	<p>Debtors team have been working both with TIC and Legal looking at how well we recover debt. We are working closely with the Better ways of Working strategic area, for example on the E-Signatures project evaluating the potential of using Adobe and DocuSign to avoid the need for staff to travel into offices to add wet signatures into documents and the Invoices Project investigating the reduction of hard copy invoices with the Purchase Order Compliance Pilot which has commenced.</p>								
<p>3. <i>governance is effective for securing the above</i></p>	<p>The Corporate Governance arrangements of the Council are acceptable. It is important that a Governance Statement includes an evaluation and conclusion and provides a clear judgement on whether the governance arrangements outlined are fit for purpose. To enable this judgement our Internal Audit service conducted a review of our arrangements against the adopted standards.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="384 562 1485 943"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2" data-bbox="384 562 1485 663">Findings of Carmarthenshire County Council Internal Audit review of AGS and Corporate Governance</th> </tr> <tr> <th data-bbox="384 663 628 734">Post Review Assurance Level</th> <th data-bbox="628 663 1485 734">Description for Assurance Level</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="384 734 628 898">Acceptable</td> <td data-bbox="628 734 1485 898"> Moderate controls, some areas of non-compliance to agreed controls Medium/Low risk of not meeting objectives Medium/Low risk of fraud, negligence, loss, damage to reputation </td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" data-bbox="384 898 1485 943">Internal Audit found no fundamental control issues to be addressed as a high priority.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Governance and Audit Committee is a key component of Corporate Governance, providing a source of assurance about the Authority's arrangements for managing risk, maintaining an effective control environment, and reporting on financial as well as non-financial performance.</p> <p>The Authority has a Risk Management Steering Group which reports directly to Cabinet, Governance and Audit Committee and Chief Officers Team (CMT). The Risk Management Steering Group examines how Risk Management can be developed and ensures that Risk Management is embedded in decision making throughout the organisation. The Group meet quarterly and is supported by the work of its Subgroups i.e. Property & Liability Risks, Motor Fleet Risks and Contingency Planning Subgroups. TIC's December 2021 review concluded that <i>'The Terms of Reference of the Risk Management Steering Groups and its various sub-groups have recently been reviewed. This will allow the Strategic Group to adopt more of a strategic approach to its consideration of risk management issues, such as undertaking regular reviews of the Corporate Risk Register.'</i></p> <p>The Steering Group's role in allocating the £250k of risk management funding could be strengthened by introducing clearer criteria for how this funding is prioritised and spent on annual basis.</p>	Findings of Carmarthenshire County Council Internal Audit review of AGS and Corporate Governance		Post Review Assurance Level	Description for Assurance Level	Acceptable	Moderate controls, some areas of non-compliance to agreed controls Medium/Low risk of not meeting objectives Medium/Low risk of fraud, negligence, loss, damage to reputation	Internal Audit found no fundamental control issues to be addressed as a high priority.	
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<p>Duty to Consult</p>									
<p><i>Is there any consultation on your assessment of performance?</i></p>	<p>A mixed approach to ascertaining views on the 2022-25 budget took place. We invited residents, businesses and community and voluntary organisations to have a say on the draft budget so the Councillors can consider feedback before making a final decision. A series of departmental seminars for all County Councillors took place over a five-day period: 17th to 21st January 2022. All efficiencies across each department were considered in detail and feedback sought. Alongside councillor engagement public consultation took place via an online survey. The survey was</p>								

	administered electronically via the Council’s online consultation page on our website. Emails were also submitted, and social media was utilised to encourage residents to complete the online survey and some provided comments on Facebook and Twitter. The results of the consultations were considered and presented to Cabinet and County Council as part of the Budget Strategy Report.
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Communities Department

Duty to Keep Performance Under Review	<p style="text-align: center;">How well are we doing and how do we know?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">How can we do better? (see bullet points)</p>
Performance Requirements	
1 <i>exercising functions effectively</i>	<p>Adult Social Care & Commissioning</p> <p>Within Adult Social Care and Commissioning Services challenges have been significant with many care homes experiencing COVID-19 outbreaks with multiple homes experiencing acute workforce pressures. Additional resources have been provided by in-house services, via mutual aid and health. Enormous collective efforts together with our partner organisations who have worked extremely well together have focused on resident safety and the prevention of care home collapse.</p> <p>Feedback from the sector has been positive and relationships have improved with the sector as a result. This has been evidenced by an independent review carried out regarding maintaining dignity and respect in the care homes during the pandemic.</p> <p>The impact from the pandemic and the on-going demands are significant but there are some notable areas of progress:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In relation to Safeguarding of Adults, Multi-agency forums have continued to meet virtually, and an additional regional forum was set up to have assurance that safeguarding processes were being followed during the pandemic. 2. The service received a positive report from CIW following an assurance visit in February 2021, which is quite remarkable during a pandemic. 3. The Director of Social Services Statutory report concludes that these functions are operating effectively. <p>Within Homes and Safer Communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We responded to the COVID-19 crisis through our TTP (Test, Trace, Protect) team which has given confidence that we have up to date intelligence on what is happening in the County and that we can react quickly when circumstances change such as the emergence of new COVID-19 clusters or an outbreak in a Care Home etc. This is from an infection control as well as advice and enforcement perspective. • Our in-house care continues to receive really positive feedback from our regulator CIW as well as from the residents, family and professional surveys. We have also started to look at a significant care home investment

programme to ensure that the facilities and environment match the standard of care provided.

- Our Development and Investment team have continued to deliver, despite COVID-19, and we are continuing to deliver additional affordable homes and have a clear three-year delivery plan moving forward. This will link with wider corporate and departmental priorities such as Town Centres, Rural Ten Towns and key regeneration projects e.g. Pentre Awel, Tyisha, Brynmefys (Llanelli) and Wauniago House (Carmarthen). We have responded positively and proactively to UK and WG initiatives around resettlement programmes and were the first in Wales to house Afghan families in May 2021.
- Environmental Protection and Business and Consumer Affairs services have continued to deliver in what was a particularly challenging year for public protection. We have had to balance our response to COVID-19 whilst still maintaining core services as COVID-19 restrictions were lifted during the year. This was particularly challenging as expectations and demands increased. We are in a relatively strong position in terms of Food Standards and Hygiene, Animal Health and Proceeds of Crime (POCA). We have also been commended for our work around Financial Exploitation and have had notable successes around illegal dog breeding.
- Our housing management service continues to perform reasonably well (evidenced by the Tenant Survey carried out in the Autumn 2021). We are performing on a par with other housing organisations. We are also reasonably well placed in terms of our approach to the collection of current tenant income and have developed a strong pre-accommodation that helps to sustain tenancies. The team have currently been shortlisted for a national award, in conjunction with the Youth Service, as a result of the innovative approach being taken.
- Whilst we have done really well to respond quickly to the change in homelessness legislation as the result of COVID-19, we need to make sure we make this response sustainable for the long term. Processes and working practices, and performance itself (e.g. Homelessness Prevention PI bottom quartile), need to be reviewed in order that we can fully support those in most need, and staff themselves. The Public Services Own Initiative Report (September 2021) begins to outline some current issues that clearly need addressing. Our new approach and the creation of the Housing “Hwb” is already beginning to see positives.
- Internal Audit reports around procurement of repair works to temporary accommodation/social lettings agency.

Housing Property & Strategic Projects

Within Housing Property & Strategic Projects, COVID-19 significantly impacted on our services as non-essential maintenance was suspended. As a result, there is significant latent maintenance work and a backlog of enquiries which we are currently working through. Response times for essential maintenance that we have been able to undertake has continued to improve, although the average time to respond to non-essential work has worsened. The 4 Tys have also been demolished as a first phase of the physical regeneration of the area. We have now completed an early market engagement process which will input into our selection process for a partner developer and to prepare key sites for development. An Internal Audit report around procurement of repair works

contract management and Welsh Government Enable Funding for Independent Living improvements has been conducted.

Leisure

Many areas within Leisure continue to operate with restrictions including our Outdoor Education offer, Theatres, and Leisure classes in terms of occupancy levels. With many posts kept vacant and numerous staff re-deployed, it has been challenging to re-engineer our services through the multiple phases of lock-down, and as various restrictions were applied and lifted. The operating procedures, safe working practices and risk assessments around every location, activity and customer engagement has had to be re-written multiple times throughout the year, with our focus always being on maintaining public safety and confidence to ensure people return in the long term, and clubs and partner organisations survive and prosper into the future.

We have a very high accreditation for our Library service meeting all targets set by Welsh Government through the 'Welsh Public Library Standards'. Also establishing stronger links across the Communities Department, developing a greater focus on the prevention of ill-health, whilst collectively promoting general well-being and long-term sustainability for the Leisure, Housing, Health and Social Care teams.

From a public health perspective, despite Leisure being a very significant positive contributor to this agenda, we must influence and work in partnership to drive this issue forward with health sector partners. Despite it only being one national metric, around a third of our children and young people are classified as overweight or obese in the County, with the figure being one of the highest in Wales. This area must continue to be a focus for our work to change life-long habits and to intervene as early as we can.

Departmental Actions Moving Forward

Adult Social Care & Commissioning

Operational challenges have made it difficult to find the space and time to strategically plan for the future. Programme of works have been suspended and need to be resurrected.

There has been an increase in complexity and demand and in order to manage demand going forward, we have to ensure that we have a robust prevention strategy to provide advice, information, assistance, early intervention and timely response to those in crisis. This will allow us to, wherever possible, help people to maintain their independence for as long as possible, and prevent unnecessary admissions to hospital and residential care. Person centred practice will be at the heart of everything we do, as well as supporting carers to continue in their caring role. Getting this right must be our key focus for the next financial year. We will:

- develop a 10 Year Strategy for Social Care incorporating Children and Adult Services.
- develop and implement a Digital Transformation Strategy for the department.
- develop and deliver a Workforce Plan to recruit, retain and develop staff to ensure a sustainable workforce for the future.

- ensure we implement the new Domiciliary Framework which effectively addresses the lack of availability of domiciliary/home care to support vulnerable adults.
- re-model and grow a quality, sustainable and efficient in-house Home Care service alongside an effective private and micro enterprise sector.
- develop and implement a Prevention Strategy for Carmarthenshire which will include continuing to work in partnership with Delta Wellbeing in support of our residents.

Homes and Safer Communities

Within Homes and Safer Communities and Housing Property and Strategic Projects we will work to:

- Review of our prevention of homeless, homelessness case work and temporary accommodation services. This needs specific focus as a result of evidence from the re-structuring process, the Ombudsman Own Initiative report and Internal Audit report on procurement of some services. This review will focus on:
 - Working practices and processes; and
 - Improving performance
- Increase focus on Council House Void numbers and turnaround times
- Improve performance around Adaptations and DFG turnaround times
- Review of the New Homes Team to be undertaken February – April 2022
- Achieve the Moving Forward in Carmarthenshire Key Actions for the Division:
 - Review social housing arrangements in Station Road, Llanelli
 - Maintain the Carmarthenshire Home Standard for all Council owned properties
- Develop a pilot project in the Tyisha ward

Leisure Services

Within Leisure Services the following are the priorities:

- 10 Year Leisure Strategy: The development of a 10-year future direction document for discussion, input, and endorsement by the new political administration for the County in early 2022/23
- Income and membership/activity recovery: With the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic changing lifestyles and habits, the service's greatest challenge will be to regain and exceed membership and income to pre-COVID-19 levels. Whilst government hardship funding has helped during periods of restricted opening, our 2022/23 business plan will be fully focussed on this income and engagement recovery process.
- Capital Projects: Completion/further development of ongoing capital projects at: Oriel Myrddin; Amman Valley; Abergwili Museum; Parc Howard; Pembrey Country Park; Llyn Llech Owain Country Park; Carmarthen Archives; Pentre Awel; Pendine Attractor and Museum of Land Speed; the National Museum store and 24/7 fitness suite elements of the successful Carmarthen Town Centre Levelling up bid;
- A new Outdoor Education offer for the County: Presenting a new model for a County-wide residential and non-residential Outdoor Education offer for comment and endorsement on the back of an asset appraisal of existing

	<p>infrastructure and ongoing COVID-19 related challenges for schools, whilst aligning with the new Donaldson curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increasing our Social Value: Further developing our work and influence on the health prevention agenda, demonstrating the impact and value of integrated and collaborative working as exemplified by schemes such as the National Exercise Referral scheme (NERS), and Mental Health exercise referral, and how these can mainstream leisure activity whilst reducing costs for core health services. ● The following will also underpin all of our work going forward: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Workforce development plan: re-visiting the draft Communities department workforce plan to create specific actions for the division, focussing on recruitment, retention, training, competencies, and coaching, with the aim of growing our own workforce and creating an attractive offer for young people. - Reducing waste and our Carbon Footprint: As part of the County Council's aim to become carbon neutral by 2030, we recognise the significant energy usage footprint that many of our large buildings carry and will continue to work to reduce and offset this footprint. ● Developing our online offer: Our ability to broadcast products digitally and to connect sites and services with end users is also becoming more important than ever, including our links into the education and health sectors. This development allows more choice for users on how and where they can engage with our services and improve their well-being.
<p>2 <i>using resources economically, efficiently and effectively;</i></p>	<p>We ensure we are using Resources economically by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● budget monitoring ● undertaking cost modelling within Commissioning services ● monitoring recruitment and retention, fortnightly. ● Sickness monitoring, vacancies and waiting lists for assessments and care as part of the recruitment and retention meeting. ● holding a robust recruitment marketing campaign for social care is underway to mitigate the short falls within the Department. ● investing in new digital IT systems along with Wifi in Care Homes and frontline staff have been provided with electronic devices. <p>We ensure that we are using Resources efficiently by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● having robust Performance Management Framework meetings to measure activity and budgets effectively, held on a monthly basis. ● Risk management and business plan actions are monitored as part of this process. ● produce a Director's Annual Report ensuring a self-assessment of Social Services functions. ● have forward work programmes and action plans. ● Regular communication within the Department working with our Marketing and Media Colleagues. <p>We ensure that we are using Resources effectively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We undertake a consultation for the Welsh Government on Social Services functions and survey residents and service users in Care Homes and Home

	<p>Care under the CIW Regulation and Inspection Act. The residents within the Care Homes rated the overall quality of the service received within care homes as Great (this is calculated through a NPS metric)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within Leisure services we undertake a NPS Customer Satisfaction survey. • We survey 6,000 housing tenants as part of our grant conditions in respect of the Welsh Government MRA application and Grant which has shown that 77% of respondents were satisfied with the Service overall. • We undertake an annual staff survey within the department calculated through a NPS metric and his showed our overall score as Good. • We hold an Improvement Board regarding Housing Needs on a weekly basis. • We have CIW feedback and Wales Audit feedback and locally commissioned audit feedback.
<p>3 <i>governance is effective for securing the above</i></p>	<p>The following ensure that we govern our services appropriately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We produce a Director’s Annual Report ensuring a self-assessment of Social Services functions which is audited by the Care Inspectorate Wales • We have a Corporate Safeguarding Board regulated by Wales Audit Office and Regional Safeguarding Board is regulated by CIW and Welsh Government where by a governance structure has oversight of policies and procedures. During 2021/22 Internal Audit reviewed Safeguarding in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Children’s Services – arrangements were found to be acceptable ○ and Adult Services – findings to be concluded • Performance Management Framework and scheduled dedicated Performance focused meetings • Integrated Executive Group along with the Health Board • Trade Union Meetings • Commissioning and Programme Group • Recruitment and Retention • SMT/DMT/CMT/Scrutiny/Full Cabinet/Website • Cabinet Member – Outstanding Team Award – • Supervision/Appraisals / 1 to 1s • Welsh Language Board • Llesiant Delta Wellbeing Board • National Meetings – ADSS Cymru/AWASH/Public Service Board • Regular meeting with Welsh Government, Hywel Dda Health Board and various bodies for relevant services such as Sport Wales for Leisure Services. • Corporate Governance Group • Business Planning and Risk Management • Provide regular reports to Scrutiny and Audit Committee.
<p>Duty to Consult</p>	
<p><i>Consultation on assessment of performance?</i></p>	<p>Regular consultation is undertaken with staff, service users and tenants. We undertake a consultation for the Welsh Government on Social Services functions and survey residents and service users in Care Homes and Home Care under the CIW Regulation and Inspection Act. Within Leisure services they undertake a NPS Customer Satisfaction survey. We regularly survey our tenants within our Housing Division. We monitor compliments and complaints within the department. Monthly meeting with CIW on our statutory function as well as Estyn linked with Children Services.</p>

Department of Education and Children's Services

<p>Duty to Keep Performance Under Review</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">How well are we doing and how do we know?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">How can we do better? (see bullet points)</p>
<p>Performance Requirements</p>	
<p>1. <i>exercising functions effectively</i></p>	<p>How well are we doing and how do we know?</p> <p>The Department's vision, priorities and Business Plan is co-constructed by a purposeful coalition of officers and headteachers and is usefully shared and debated with stakeholders e.g. Scrutiny Committee, Headteacher Groups, through staff and Governor briefings. We strive to ensure a golden thread through our business planning processes at all levels of our corporate 'wedding cake'.</p> <p>CCC has a well-established annual business cycle. Initiated every Autumn, it is drafted in deference to corporate priorities and departmental self-evaluation, ensuring a bottom up and top-down dynamic. Links to the budgetary process are made early on and the finalised version is subject to elected member scrutiny. Longer term planning is conditioned by the departmental plan to 2032 and is helpfully arranged under 20 specific 'purpose pieces'.</p> <p>The Department's Performance and Information Officer provides valuable assistance in ensuring that the Business Plan is aligned with corporate priorities and service level performance metrics. Quarterly reporting (PIMS system) ensures that officers are held to account in terms of progress and quality of service delivery with respect to priorities.</p> <p>Scrutiny reports are insightful and comprehensive and are effectively challenged, promoting active debate.</p> <p>A biennial Headteacher questionnaire provides important feedback and constructive suggestions for adapting and developing future service delivery. Pupils and parents are also consulted, and all information is cross-referenced and triangulated against corporate priorities, against information gleaned from focus groups such as several Head Teacher fora, unions, and officer staff groups. A notable feature of departmental structure are the eight Strategic Focus Groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and Learning; • Leadership; • Sustainable Communities for Learning; • Cymraeg; • Well-being; • Digital Learning; • Supporting Vulnerable Learners Group; • Children and Families; <p>which provide important opportunities to implement key issues for schools. These groups are making a sound and evolving impact in terms of delivering on important issues identified at school level by Heads and the school improvement team, whilst</p>

also keeping an eye out for strategic developments at county, regional, national, and international levels.

Improvement planning is developing well and is currently focussed on arriving at a smaller number of key priorities. The Departmental data unit is being bolstered with a couple of important new posts to enhance our analysis and interpretation of data trends over time.

The Performance Information Management System (PIMS) is well established. SMART targets are monitored quarterly and require both qualitative and quantitative updates.

The Department's COVID-19 response is considered very laudable and has been praised by regulators. A Continuity of Learning plan was quickly put in place and enacted. Resources to support care hubs and well-being in schools was supplemented by external input from Prof. Barry Carpenter. In addition, the recovery curriculum, and the imperative to support vulnerable pupils' teaching and learning was assisted by Prof. Lee Elliot Major. Weekly (and sometimes daily) Health & Safety briefings provided vital support, which was augmented by weekly drop-in sessions on various topics pertaining to emergency response.

Each member of staff is afforded an annual Appraisal. These are structured opportunities to consider what is going well and whether there are any constraints or blockages with aspects of service delivery. The 'Recognise, Grow, Together' approach focusses on strengths and helps service areas to grow by exploring what has been done well and how people can work together to achieve our ideas.

Scrutiny is well-established in CCC and has been referenced above. There are opportunities for Heads of Service to meet our Portfolio holder. All main policy directives enter the corporate process and are discussed at DMT, CMT, Pre-Cabinet and cabinet with a number progressing to Scrutiny and full Council.

2012 inspection areas for development

Estyn thematic reports are tallied on a spreadsheet and are all assigned to the relevant strategic Group for implementation. Other regulators influence business planning in a very positive manner such as aspects of Children's Services and the Youth Justice Board.

There are demonstrable improvements to service delivery. The YSS has developed very well over the last five years as testified by now achieving a range of external rewards and earning national recognition. Similarly, the behaviour and engagement service has developed well.

Complaints and compliments are considered at DMT on a quarterly basis and the annual report is acted upon promptly. These reports are often insightful and prompt definitive action.

Service reviews have been completed for DMT with 3rd tier managers invited in to discuss performance.

There is a comprehensive Self Evaluation Report process which included 2 away days during summer 2022 and an on-going review and evaluation process.

Pupil Admissions – all statutory targets met and currently facilitating applications for

	<p>refugees along with all other admission applications to schools.</p> <p>School Organisation Code – All changes to schools that require a statutory consultation process under the School Organisation Code have been completed in line with the Code’s requirements.</p> <p>School Catering have adapted well to new ways of working and have continued to provide a hot meal service in all schools. The service continues to put food safety and allergens compliance as a high priority.</p> <p>How can we do better?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are currently undertaking a review of department Business Planning and Monitoring processes, one recommendation being to produce Business Plans in line with our Strategic Focus Groups rather than Divisional Business Plans. • Our Service Reviews state how each service can improve (too many examples to list) and we are using this list to inform our next round of Business Plans.
<p>2. using resources economically, efficiently and effectively;</p>	<p>How well are we doing and how do we know?</p> <p>The Council’s allocation of resources reflects the priority afforded to education services. The local authority spends above the indicator-based assessment for education services and has increased and protected schools’ budgets against a backdrop of financial pressures across the council. The local authority also has a significant capital programme in relation to schools both in terms of new school builds and investment in its existing schools’ estate. In 2021/22 Carmarthenshire delegated 87.9% of the education budget (excluding school transport) to schools which was above the Welsh average of 87.3%.</p> <p>The authority has a comprehensive range of service level agreements in place with nearly all schools buying in to all the SLAs.</p> <p>For the last 5 years the County Council has protected schools’ budgets and have not required schools to make efficiency savings.</p> <p>Over the last few years growth funding has been allocated to address pressures within schools. The local authority has established task and finish groups involving schools’ representatives to consider key pressures and how the formula can be adapted and growth funding utilised. For example, in 2022/23, following consultation with our Headteachers, supplementary funding in addition to honouring pay awards and inflation, £500k was allocated to support well-being and behaviour in our Secondary Schools, £500k to support ALN in primary schools, and £1 million into primary school formula funding to support the cost of maintaining current provision.</p> <p>The review of our investment programme in schools is expected to provide cabinet with advice and recommendations to address the budget pressures and challenges of provision in primary schools.</p> <p>The authority is aware of current financial risks and those on the horizon. They recognise that it will be necessary to respond to increasing challenges, including potential increases in costs relating to staff pay and pensions, energy and transport. Additional funding has been provided to schools on a regular basis to reflect demands. The Schools’ Formula Funding is regularly reviewed to ensure that the formula remains appropriate, given the changes in the provision of education services and the contextual challenges of individual schools. Adaptations have been made to address emerging pressures and new priorities e.g. review of ALN funding.</p>

The School Budget Forum, which is representative of the different sectors, has constructive discussions and helps inform decisions in regard to allocating resources. The local authority has arrangements in place to work with the schools in deficit and has intervened appropriately. Over the last few years, the number of schools in a deficit position has reduced from 47 in 2019 to 20 in 2022. Reserves have moved from a deficit £1.9m position in 2019 to £15.2m surplus in 2022. This is due to a robust process of holding schools to account, additional funding awarded to schools from the corporate budget and additional WG funding.

A significant amount of work has gone into understanding the current and projected financial position of Carmarthenshire schools.

During 2021/22:

- aggregate primary school balances increased by £3.2m (approximately 5% of formula funding),
- 19 primary schools had 'in-year' deficit of which 13 of these had 80 or fewer pupils, with an average overspend of 13% in year.

2022/23:

- 13 of the 20 schools (65%) which require a licenced deficit have below 80 pupils.
- The average licenced deficit forecast for these schools is 32% of their formula funding.

Schools have taken advantage of significant additional grant funding released during the pandemic. This has impacted positively on many school budgets this year and into next year:

- Additional Grant funding from Welsh Government, both during the year (e.g. Additional Learning, RRRS) as well as specific grants late in the financial year (e.g. ALN COVID-19 received in February, Caretaking & Cleaning grant funding)
- Reduced activities normally funding from non-capitation budgets e.g. school trips
- COVID-19 related absence cover have been claimable from Welsh Government hardship fund.

The authority has received appropriate plans from schools indicating how they will address deficits and use the additional balances.

The substantial grant funding received from Welsh Government and additional COVID-19 related funding has been welcomed and has been delegated to schools whilst also funding some core school improvement support services. Funding allocated to Partneriaeth, the regional consortium, is allocated to whomever is best placed to meet the grant conditions i.e. Partneriaeth or Local Authority. There are robust monitoring systems in place and regular internal audit of systems, processes and expenditure to ensure that the funding is used effectively to support learners. The Local Authority supports schools in securing external funding e.g. Taith and have taken advantage of European funding to provide support for vulnerable learners. The Youth Support Services have accessed substantial ESF funding to provide bespoke solutions to support young people and reduce NEETS.

The County Council secured substantial Welsh Government funding to support schools to address COVID-19 challenges. To enable schools to focus on teaching and learning key grants such as RRRS were delegated to schools whilst the County Council took the strategic decision to manage centrally key provisions such as additional cleaning, PPE and TTP.

	<p>Schools are well supported to maximise income generation and the Schools' TIC Officer has helped reduce costs and share best practice. The School Development Fund was introduced in 2018 and has provided seed funding for schools to implement value for money proposals.</p> <p>The local authority compares its costs and outcomes with those of other similar authorities, however comparisons are difficult due to issues such as number of schools, rurality, language and pupil numbers.</p> <p><u>We provide the Lead Officer role for the delivery of the procured Independent School and Community-Based Counselling Service to ensure service delivery maximises access and outcomes for children and young people experiencing emotional distress who want to seek support from an independent counsellor.</u></p> <p>Efficiency</p> <p>Realising the benefits of collaborative and partnership working, Carmarthenshire was instrumental in establishing Partneriaeth to provide services to schools across the new region. During Summer 2022 Estyn undertook a focus piece of work on the new regional arrangement noting</p> <p>Partneriaeth has a robust, transparent governance structure led by a Joint Committee consisting of the Leader of each County Council and Cabinet Members for Education. There are SLAs with councils to provide key services e.g. Finance, HR, Legal. The Strategic Boards support the JC to ensure that the regional service meets Local Authority requirements. A regular LA/Partneriaeth Quality Assurance Meeting allows Carmarthenshire officers to discuss local issues and challenges and address any concerns. Partneriaeth is audited via an SLA with Pembrokeshire County Council. Carmarthenshire work with a range of other local authorities/partners on a range of initiatives. Carmarthenshire, along with Swansea and Pembrokeshire established Partneriaeth, a new regional school improvement consortium to provide professional development opportunities for our schools.</p> <p>Across other service areas we work with partners in the South West and Mid Wales region ensuring best value for money and sharing effective practice e.g. CYSUR-Mid & West Wales Safeguarding Board Safeguarding children and ALN Transformation work.</p>
<p>3 <i>governance is effective for securing the above</i></p>	<p>How well are we doing and how do we know?</p> <p>Scrutiny Committee Safeguarding Board Admissions Forum – meets on a regular basis to oversee school admissions process to scrutinise admissions arrangements Corporate Programme and Project Governance Boards (e.g .MECP)</p> <p>How can we do better?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger communications with schools so that they understand their role in the admissions process.
<p>Duty to Consult</p>	
<p><i>Is there any consultation on your assessment of performance?</i></p>	<p>The department endeavours to consult with stakeholders through a variety of consultations. Some of these processes were disrupted during the period of the pandemic but as schools and Departmental services returned to a more normal way of working these processes have returned.</p> <p>As the end of summer term approached, we conducted separate surveys with Headteachers, pupils and parents to ascertain their views on the services we offer</p>

through schools and other departmental services, which in turn are reflected in our Service Evaluation Report.

Estyn carried out a number of school inspections throughout the academic year and their recommendations are taken on by the schools governing body and the School Improvement Team as part of their workplan.

Estyn Local Authority Link Inspector (LALI) virtual visits are conducted throughout the year, which gives Inspectors an opportunity to focus on current priorities, for example Self-evaluation and future priorities for improvement. There's also an opportunity for the LA to share any current issues. Likewise, Estyn can discuss inspection developments with school leaders. The link inspector can help us reflect on and refine their strengths and areas for improvement.

The Department has a rolling Programme of Internal Audit Reports, whereby Service Managers produce a report on their areas of responsibility and are invited to attend a DMT meeting which reviews and challenges the report. If deemed necessary the reports are forwarded to corporate committees, CMT, Pre-Cabinet, Scrutiny, etc, for further examination.



Arolygiaeth Gofal
Cymru
Care Inspectorate
Wales

In November 2021, Care Inspectorate Wales published its Assurance Check 2021 letter on Carmarthenshire County Council

[211104-carmarthenshire-en.pdf \(careinspectorate.wales\)](#)

This was a very positive report

Children's Social Care Assurances

- *Approachable and supportive leaders*
- *Culture of co-production and personal outcomes being developed with people*
- *Clarity in operational methodology*
- *Strong multi-agency cooperation*
- *Positive integrated approach to a culture of prevention through joint working*
- *Low CLA population*
- *Makes a positive contribution to the well-being of people in the pandemic period*

Children's Social Care Risks - CIW identified no significant areas of risk:

The Assurance Check identified inconsistency for some care leavers in relation to their PAs

Next Steps *CIW identified strengths and areas for priority improvement and will review the progress of these areas through performance evaluation review meetings with the heads of service and director.*

CIW expect the areas of improvement identified to be included in the local authority's improvement plans.

Children's Education Assurances

- Leaders have a good understanding of issues in the authority including around schools causing concern
- Leaders maintained the good communication between departments throughout the pandemic to ensure that support for schools and other providers was available quickly
- A substantial number of primary schools have been removed from Estyn Review.
- Pre-inspection reports show that the authority generally knows its schools well
- LA is proactive in increasing Welsh medium provision in the primary sector

- LA officers appear to have suitable plans in place to deal with the issues regarding leadership of smaller schools, for example by federating or merging them
- The authority has supported schools and providers to understand and embed the new ALN act
- Effective scrutiny arrangements

Concerns

- There are a very few primary schools in a statutory category.
- With the local authority leaving ERW, there is uncertainty over some arrangements with Partneriaeth
- Recruiting headteachers to lead a few primary schools is causing concern
- Although the overall, the number of pupils who did not progress from year 10 to 11 in Carmarthenshire is slightly below the national average for the last two years, the rates of pupils who cannot be matched to a destination are high in a minority of schools over the last two years.
- Budget balances in schools

Environment Department

<p>Duty to Keep Performance Under Review</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">How well are we doing and how do we know?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">How can we do better? (see bullet points)</p>
<p>Performance Requirements</p>	
<p><i>1 exercising functions effectively</i></p>	<p>Place and Sustainability The Planning service was subject of an Audit Wales review in 2021/22 that found significant and long-standing performance issues in the planning service that needed to be urgently addressed to help support delivery of the Council’s ambitions. <i>The Council considered the findings and recommendations and prepared a detailed response and action plan which looks to address the issues identified.</i> There has been a turnaround in % planning applications determined in time.</p> <p>Net Zero Carbon - the Council declare a climate emergency and was the first in Wales to publish an Action Plan. Internal Audit reviews of Net Zero Carbon found High level systems and controls in place.</p> <p>Waste Waste was subject of an Audit Wales review in 2021/22 <i>It found that the Council has met its statutory recycling targets and has recently drafted a strategy to make its waste service more sustainable, but it has not finalised the strategy or got a clear plan for dealing with the large number of fly-tipping incidents in the county.</i> 8 recommendations have been addressed. <i>The Waste Strategy has now been approved. There needs to be a clear action focused plan on the agreed steps to recover county rates to 65% and then the steps to get to 70%.</i> Fly-tipping clearing performance is back to pre-COVID-19 levels despite a 33% increase in the number of incidents cleared.</p> <p>Highways and Transportation The Division produces an Annual Highways Asset Management Plan that</p>

	<p>is reported to Scrutiny. There is not a lot of Performance information available.</p> <p>Service Improvement We have successfully implemented a hub within Place & Sustainability to support the Development Management and Enforcement Officers. The collaboration between Cleaning Services and Education has been pivotal for Cleaning Service and Property Services in relation to COVID-19, PPE and Maintenance.</p> <p>How can we do better?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Business Planning • Improve SMART action planning and Performance Indicator suites • Introduce better data driven decision making • Improve access and use of performance dashboards • Prioritise improvement areas based on evidence • Ensure more integrating reporting of performance at department and corporate levels.
<p>2. <i>using resources economically, efficiently and effectively.</i></p>	<p><u>Economically</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The department has adapted to many years of budget reductions whilst maintaining services. • The Revenue Budget strategy is consulted on every year with Scrutiny. <p><u>Efficiency</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The department has strengthened its business planning and extending its PI suites. • The department is monitoring both departmental and divisional business plan content • The Director has increased the service challenge processes within the department. • Revenue and Capital Budgets are monitored by Scrutiny every quarter of the year. <p><u>Effectively</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4,034 residents participated in engagement on the new waste strategy • Consultation on various schemes e.g. Sandy Road corridor 334 participants • Internal Audit of Ash Dieback, Departmental Expenditure, Flood Defence & Coastal Protection were found to be acceptable. <p>How can we do better?</p> <p><u>Economically</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to make better use of data and intelligence to help inform future workforce development requirements. Ensure that the service is able to further respond to the on-going recruitment and retention challenges especially within some of areas that compete with the private sector such as Planning, Property Design. <p><u>Efficiently</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lack of identified capacity within the Department to support change and transformation objectives has been highlighted as a

	<p>significant area for us to focus upon, and this has the potential to impact on its ability to progress a number of key priorities such as service improvements that are critical moving forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department will be reviewing its Performance Monitoring arrangements to ensure they align with the new Corporate Performance Monitoring Framework to establish a full picture of both Strategic and Operational performance. • We will develop and establish Outcome focused measures and Performance Indicators to support service improvement and identify gaps in our monitoring arrangements. <p><u>Effectively</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of our web content is key for our department moving forward. Our aim is improving the information available and to develop further web forms which integrate with back-office systems to eradicate the need for manual input and paper applications. We aim to add electronic payments to as many of our application processes and an end-to-end process where the customer receives updates on their enquiry/order/report as it progresses. We have identified some areas of web development that will be key to improving customer satisfaction and reducing failure demand such as planning applications.
<p>3. <i>governance is effective for securing the above</i></p>	<p>How well are we doing and how do we know?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue and Capital Budgets are reported quarterly to Scrutiny Committee • Departmental Business Plans are produced and reviewed every year. They are submitted to various scrutiny committees. • All outcomes are monitored through quarterly reports to DMT and Scrutiny committee. <p>The Governance and Audit Committee is a key component of Corporate Governance, providing a source of assurance about the Authority's arrangements for managing risk, maintaining an effective control environment, and reporting on financial as well as non-financial performance.</p> <p>The Authority has a Risk Management Steering Group which reports directly to Cabinet, Governance and Audit Committee and Chief Officers Team (CMT). The Risk Management Steering Group examines how Risk Management can be developed and ensures that Risk Management is embedded in decision making throughout the organisation. The Group meet quarterly and is supported by the work of its Subgroups i.e. Property & Liability Risks, Motor Fleet Risks and Contingency Planning Subgroups. TIC's December 2021 review concluded that <i>'The Terms of Reference of the Risk Management Steering Groups and its various sub-groups have recently been reviewed. This will allow the Strategic Group to adopt more of a strategic approach to its consideration of risk management issues, such as undertaking regular reviews of the Corporate Risk Register.'</i> The Steering Group's role in allocating the £250k of risk management funding could be strengthened by introducing clearer criteria for how this funding</p>

	<p>is prioritised and spent on annual basis</p> <p><u>Cabinet Advisory Panels</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the Local Development Plan –To take political ownership of the LDP and ensure that the LDP process is managed in accordance with the Development Agreement. • Cross Party Advisory Panel on Climate Change – to be established. <p>How can we do better?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure to improve governance and compliance
Duty to Consult	
<i>Is there any consultation on your assessment of performance?</i>	<p><u>Highways and Transportation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our design teams work with a range of key clients and ensuring their designs meet the needs of clients and service users is a fundamental requirement. • Public engagement is a cornerstone of the development of our engineering projects. Developing schemes for highway improvements and traffic management changes involve public consultation. • Involving local communities and engaging with members of the public for Traffic Regulation Orders which change speed limits, alter parking provision or traffic management is a statutory duty which we undertake and manage on a significant scale. • The Division works closely with Town and Community Councils on a range of issues including the management of public lighting, the recent introduction of LED lighting, key consultation of traffic and highway improvements, development of PROW maintenance and management, and Traffic Regulation Orders for speed limit, parking and other traffic management improvements. • The Division actively support the promotion of events our partner organisations bring forward to promote places, activities and events in the County such as the Tour of Britain, Llanelli Pride, Christmas Markets and this also includes free parking offers. • The County Council is a partner in both the Llanelli and Carmarthen BID providing financial support and partnership working with a range of stakeholders and businesses. • The Division works with volunteer groups on issues such as the maintenance of Public Rights of Way in conjunction with Ramblers ‘Paths to Well-being’ officers were initiated • Our Passenger Transport Team continues to consult with service users and stakeholders and work regionally with Welsh Government/TfW and neighbouring Authorities to understand demand for public transport services in a changing post COVID-19 environment.

- Our Transport Planning Team also promote School Travel Plans in our schools to involve pupils in participating and encouraging health travel patterns and our Road Safety Teams reinforce this with kerbcraft and cycle training.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic the Highways & Transport Division introduced public realm changes to support the town centre recovery and undertook a widespread consultation exercise which had comments from 52 businesses and 286 members of the public which were incorporated within a review of measures

Place and Sustainability

- Facilitation of Carmarthenshire Nature Partnership
- Intelligence gathered by planning hwb can identify service improvements.
- Full public and focused consultation undertaken during the preparation of the LDP and other policy documents and planning interventions such as LDOs.
- Key stakeholder and other forums (including viability/developer forum).
- Facilitate, participate and lead on local, regional and national thematic groups.
- Establishment of schools climate action consultation group and implementation of the manifesto for NZC.
- Opportunities provided for the residents to engage with us during the process of a planning application.

Waste

- Our budget consultation work has been identified as best practice in Wales and we are building on this. We will be further developing the Council's consultation and engagement approaches during 2021.
- Our Consultation and Engagement on the Future Waste Strategy had over 4,000 responses and directly shaped our future service design.
- Recycling Participation Surveys (door to door) to recommence by Community Recycling Team once Covid- 19 restrictions allow with a view to increasing participation in the various recycling schemes. Outcomes to be incorporated into future waste services delivery.

Property Maintenance

- We consult on a regular basis with our internal customers. Consultation can include building maintenance, compliance and condition of buildings, and property design.

Service Development

- We are the lead support for Integrated Impact Assessments within our department, however we have limited resources.

The Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic – unplanned transformation

In March 2020, Carmarthenshire County Council was about to enter one of the most challenging periods ever faced by local government. The impact of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic presented a unique set of challenges for the whole country, and there was an acceptance that Councils would need to be at the heart of the local response to the crisis.

When in July 2020, the Council began to emerge from the immediate period of the crisis, there was a recognition that 'things would never quite be the same' and that we were already not the same organisation that we had been only five months earlier.

The Council was keen therefore to capture the learning from its response to the pandemic; what worked well/didn't work so well, and how this could potentially change 'what we do' and 'how we do', it in the future.

The emergence of the COVID-19 crisis meant that services had to adapt quickly to put in place alternative delivery arrangements for users and staff to ensure continuity of provision. This often required innovative and creative thinking and a multi-team approach to be adopted between services within the Council and with other public sector partners, and this experience can only benefit the way that we shape and deliver our services moving forward. Services have also demonstrated themselves to be extremely resilient and are now armed with more robust service continuity plans and a more mature approach to risk - this means that they can move with greater confidence and ambition in seeking ways of developing more purposeful services.

The move to more remote working and less reliance on face-to-face meetings and paper-based processes, alongside changing customer expectations and demands, will provide an opportunity for the Council to consider the type of services that it provides in future and how it delivers them. The pandemic may also have changed customer expectations of 'how' and 'when' they access services, and therefore the Council may need to consider adopting more flexible service delivery models e.g., 7 day/ 24 hr working.

However, there will also be a need to ensure that services continue to respond to customer needs and expectations. Alternative delivery models put in place as part of a response to a pandemic may not be what the customer wants during more normal circumstances. Co-production therefore should be a central feature of the Council's approach to reviewing and re-designing its services moving forward.

This is also now an opportunity to re-set or go back to basics in using some core principles that underpin service delivery. We do not always have to have extensive service remodelling or to spend significant amounts of money to deliver better services. Simple behavioural and process changes around the way we treat customers can result in dramatic improvements in service provision – it doesn't always require a big investment in staff and systems to achieve this.

The benefits of having a more flexible, dynamic, empowered workforce will now be equally as important to support our transformation programme, and to help the Council achieve its wider aims and objectives. The likelihood is that our staff recruitment challenges are likely to be with us for at least the medium term, and therefore there will need to be a greater focus on the development and retention of staff, which will be a priority of our Workforce Strategy moving forward. The Council is seeking to develop a more sustainable approach to meet its future workforce needs by adopting a 'grow your own' strategy. The Council is currently about to launch its 'Future Workforce' programme which will seek to increase graduate, apprenticeship and work experience opportunities.

There also needs to a considerable focus on the well-being agenda moving forward, including developing a sustainable approach to remote working and re-connecting the organisation to a whole generation of new starters who will have not met their colleagues at all on a face-to-face basis.

The following emerging priorities have been identified for the next phase of the Council's transformational journey

Emerging Priority	Transformation Aims
People	To oversee the development of a Workforce Strategy and delivery of key workforce priorities to enable the Council to become a more modern and responsive organisation and an 'Employer of Choice'.
Service Design & Improvement	To provide for a more sustainable and creative approach to the review, remodelling and improvement of Council services
Efficiencies and Value for Money	To continue to deliver financial savings through efficiencies or cost reductions and smarter ways of working.
Income & Commercialisation	To develop a more commercial approach to the delivery of Council services with a view to increasing the level of income generated.
Customers & Digital Transformation	To continue to make better use of technology to deliver smarter, efficient service processes and to deliver a better experience for customers
Buildings	To exploit the opportunities presented by a move to hybrid working to further rationalise the Council's accommodation portfolio and to modernise and improve the working environment within the remaining core buildings.
Net Zero Carbon	To support the Council in delivering transformational change in support of key NZC targets
Schools	To assist schools in identifying cost reductions and better ways of working and support the development of more sustainable school budgets and help protect front line academic provision.

Consultation on Performance Requirements

We consulted on our performance as a Council with residents, businesses, staff and Trade Unions. It is important that our self-assessment of performance is as realistic as possible and that we do not 'mark our own papers' but triangulate our assessment between performance data, regulatory findings and our customers views. The consultation responses have been analysed and will be reported in due course with proposals for improvement from the findings in order to influence our development work in terms of future business planning and organisational improvement.

Residents Consultation

The survey took place during the period from 23rd June 2022 to 5th August 2022 and a total of 2,195 responses were received. In undertaking this survey residents were asked a series of 5 statements in direct relation to the Council's performance.

Overall, there was agreement from residents that the Council provides good services. However, it is apparent that more needs to be done to ensure that residents understand how they can participate in decision making. This extends to ensuring that residents have access to up-to-date information on the Council's performance and are made aware of how to access this information.

It is evident that it would be to the benefit of both the Council and residents that more information was provided with regards to how the Council utilises its financial resources and why investment has been focussed in certain areas.

Proposals for improvement in this regard will be agreed upon and will continue to influence our development work in terms of future business planning and organisational improvement.

Business Consultation

The survey took place during the period from 26th August to 30th September and a total of 36 responses were received. In undertaking this business owners were asked a series of 8 statements in direct relation to the Council's performance.

It is apparent that more needs to be done to ensure that businesses understand how they are able to participate in decision making. This extends to ensuring that easily accessible and timely information on the Council's performance is made available and businesses are made aware of how to access this information.

It is evident that it would be to the benefit of both the Council and businesses that more information was provided with regards to how the Council utilises its financial resources and why investment has been focussed in certain areas. This would serve to develop the knowledge and understanding of business owners with regards to how resources are utilised and what that means for the private sector in the county.

Proposals for improvement in this regard have been prepared and will continue to influence our development work in terms of future business planning and organisational improvement.

Staff Consultation

The survey took place during the period from 27th June 2022 to 5th August 2022 and a total of 1,733 responses were received which equates to 22% of Carmarthenshire County Council staff.

In undertaking this survey staff were asked a series of 11 statements in direct relation to the Council's performance. These were worded in a way in which the respondent answered these questions from the perspective of their service area rather than the organisation as a whole.

Overall, staff were positive with regards to their service's performance. However, it would be fair to say that it would be beneficial to increase the degree to which performance information is shared across the organisation. This would serve to increase the knowledge and understanding that staff possess in relation to the corporate processes in place to ensure that performance measurement is fair and balanced.

Proposals for improvement in this regard have been prepared and will continue to influence our development work in terms of future business planning and organisational improvement.

Trade Unions

The survey took place during the period from 12th August to 23rd September and a total of 5 responses were received.

A series of five statements were posed with a focus on the way that the Council uses its resources, its services and governance. Overall, respondents disagreed with the statements, which indicates that more needs to be done to indicate how the Council uses its resources in an economic, efficient and effective way. This extends to increasing transparency with regards to the Council's governance arrangements.

Proposals for improvement in this regard will be agreed upon and will continue to influence our development work in terms of future business planning and organisational improvement.



We would welcome your feedback,
please send your thoughts, views and opinions to:



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