

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 19 October 2023
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	All Scrutiny Committees
Report Title:	Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Council Annual-Self Assessment Report 2022/23
Purpose of Report:	To seek Cabinet endorsement of the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment Report 2022/23, incorporating the key findings from engagement with our key stakeholders.
Report Owner:	Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance & Resources
Responsible Officer:	Tom Bowring, Director of Corporate Resources
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Both Council staff and elected Members play a key role in enabling us to assess whether the Council is achieving its Well-being Objectives, delivering value for money and enhancing citizen well-being. Consequently, all Members including Scrutiny Committees, the Governance & Audit Committee and Council staff have been consulted on the self-assessment findings as part of a programme of internal and external engagement (including the Trade Unions) between September and October 2023. This is in line with requirements outlined in the performance requirements (Part 6 section 89-93) of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet. The Annual Self-Assessment findings will inform the Annual Delivery Plan commitments and associated Service Plans for the period 2024/25. The Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self- Assessment Report will be a matter for consideration by Council.
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment (Appendix A) draws on a wide range of information sources (including the views of our key stakeholders) to assess the progress made by the Council in meeting its Annual Delivery Plan commitments for 2022/23 as aligned to our Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives. The findings will enable us to identify how we can further enhance our internal processes and use of resources to improve and support achievement of our Annual Delivery Plan commitments and our Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives. The Annual Self-Assessment report is a requirement for Welsh Local Authorities under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, which requires the Council to keep its performance 	

under review, consult on and then publish a report setting out the conclusions of its self-assessment once in respect of every financial year.

- In line with our performance duties, we have engaged with key stakeholders on the performance of our services throughout the past year and the areas we need to focus on in the future. We have also sought their views on whether our four Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives continue to remain relevant. Alongside this engagement work, we have continually reviewed the relevance of our Well-being Objectives through our Annual Performance Calendar of activities, focusing on intended outcomes, achievements and challenges. Through this work in 2022/23, we are assured that our Well-being Objectives are appropriate and continue to remain relevant and align to the priorities in the Public Services Board's (PSB) Well-being Plan 2023-2028 and will continue to complement the work of the PSB going forward.
- A further programme of engagement activities has been undertaken during September/October 2023 via the Let's talk about Life in the Vale Public Opinion Survey (an online survey, with options to complete over the telephone) and social media communications on the Annual Self-Assessment findings, both of which are still ongoing. The Draft Self-Assessment report has also been widely circulated with a request for comments from key partners including the Public Services Board, Town and Community Councils and recognised Trade Unions via the Joint Consultative Forum. The report has also been circulated to local businesses for their views and promoted internally to seek staff views.
- A summary of the consultation findings is appended (**Appendix B**). This includes early headline findings from the ongoing Let's Talk about Life in the Vale Survey (with nearly 1,800 residents having completed the survey to date) and an overview of social media sentiment on Council engagement over the past year. It must be noted that the headline data does not reflect a representative cross-section of Vale citizens' views as engagement work remains ongoing to ensure we encourage participation from all parts of our community, especially traditionally hard to reach/engage/under-represented groups. The final survey analysis will reflect a wide range of views to inform our plans and service improvements and will be reported to Cabinet later in the year, with the full data published in parallel.
- Overall, social media sentiment on our public engagement work over the past year presents a mixed picture. Social media interactions about our services, decision making and events especially on Facebook is generally positive and these typically come from posts sharing information about new Council facilities and services. However, we have also seen significant levels of negative engagement on interactions relating to changes to Council services, particularly those perceived as reductions.
- Early headline findings from the Let's talk about Life in the Vale survey indicate that respondents key areas of concern generally align with the Council's critical challenges as identified in the current Annual Delivery Plan 2023/24 (cost of living, Project Zero - the Council's climate and nature emergency response and organisational resilience, especially in meeting growing demand for core services) which, gives some assurance that our areas of focus in the current year and those emerging from our Annual Self-Assessment findings are headed in the right direction in terms of residents priorities. However, there was significant dissatisfaction from respondents about the quality of Council services, whether Council services represented value for money, that the Council acts in the interest of local residents and takes their views into account when making a decision. In terms of interaction with the Council, just over half of respondents (53%, 949)

stated that they know who their local Councillor is with (50%, 897) being aware of some of their Councillors' responsibilities.

- As reflected in our self-assessment findings, effective public engagement remains an area of continued focus for the Council. We will continue to improve how we communicate our financial and other challenges, involve and listen to residents and ensure that we are providing clear and simple explanations of how decisions have been taken and the impact they will have. In response to the emerging insights we have further strengthened the areas of future focus within our self-assessment and reviewed and revised our overall engagement score from 'Good' to 'Fair'.
- As part of the engagement work, elected Members were also consulted on the draft report via Scrutiny Committees and the comments of Members have been addressed within the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment report 2022/23 as appropriate. No formal recommendations were made to Cabinet by the Healthy Living & Social Care, Learning & Culture and Environment & Regeneration Scrutiny Committees, with all three noting the report. In total, seven comments on the Annual Self-Assessment report are being referred to Cabinet following consideration by the Homes & Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee (4) and Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee.
- In accordance with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, Governance & Audit Committee have played a specific role in contributing to the Annual Self-Assessment process and having reviewed a draft Annual Self-Assessment report on 18th September, 2023, referred their views and comments on the report to Cabinet (10 in total) which have been addressed within the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment 2022/23 report.
- Alongside the engagement insight gleaned throughout the year, we have evaluated a wide range of performance and other data insights from our annual planning and performance calendar of activities including the Directorate Self-Assessment and Peer Challenge process which has enabled us to draw conclusions on how well we are using our resources to support achievement of the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives.
- Within this context, we believe that on balance we have met our Annual Delivery Plan commitments for 2022/23, in what continued to be another challenging year for the Council and have attributed a judgement of '**Good**', reflecting the achievement of over 85% of in-year activities and performance targets. We have judged our use of resources to be '**Good**' because we have good evidence of how we have used our resources economically, efficiently, effectively and equitably to enhance performance, achieve outcomes and meet need and are in a strong position to secure future service improvements sustainably. From the review, assessment and on-going monitoring work undertaken throughout the year via the internal and external audit work programme as well the findings of the performance evaluation, '**reasonable assurance**' can be given that the governance arrangements for the Vale of Glamorgan Council continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework.
- Cabinet are asked to consider the consultation summary findings and to refer the report to Governance & Audit Committee (23rd October, 2023) for their consideration and approval.
- Any recommendation(s) following Governance & Audit Committee's consideration of the Final Draft Annual Self-Assessment 2022/23 findings (23rd October) will be referred back to Cabinet (2nd November 2023) for final review with Cabinet then referring the report on to Full Council

(20th November, 2023) for consideration and approval. Should Governance & Audit Committee have no comments, it is recommended that the Committee refer the report directly to Full Council for final approval.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet considers the consultation summary findings and endorses the updated Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment report 2022/23 appended at **Appendix A**.
2. That Cabinet refers the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment report to Governance & Audit Committee (23rd October, 2023) for their consideration and approval in line with their statutory role, under Part 6 (section 114) of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and that upon consideration the Committee refers any recommendations back to Cabinet for their final consideration (2nd November, 2023) prior to Cabinet referring this report, the comments of the Governance & Audit Committee and Cabinet's responses to Council (20th November, 2023) for consideration and approval. Should Governance & Audit Committee have no further comments to refer to Cabinet for consideration that the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment report be referred to Full Council (20th November, 2023) for consideration and approval.
3. That the use of paragraph 15.14.2(ii) of the Council's Constitution (urgent decision procedure) be authorised to allow the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self - Assessment 2022/23 to be referred to the Governance & Audit Committee meeting taking place on 23rd October, 2023 for consideration, with any recommendations considered by Cabinet on 2nd November, 2023, prior to Full Council consideration on 20th November, 2023.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To enable Cabinet to consider the consultation feedback and then approve the subsequent changes to the Final Draft Annual Self-Assessment report 2022/23.
2. To enable the Governance & Audit Committee to consider the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment findings in line with its statutory role, under Part 6 (section 114) of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
3. To ensure that the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment report 2022/23 can be presented to Council in November for consideration and approval.

1. Background

- 1.1 Self-assessments form a core part of statutory local government audit, regulatory and inspection processes in Wales. The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (LG&E), requires the Council to keep performance under review, consult and report on our performance through self-assessment, and arrange and respond to a panel performance assessment once in every electoral cycle.
- 1.2 Self-assessment is a way of evaluating, critically and honestly, our current approach to decision making to secure improvement for the future. Consequently, it needs to be embedded across the organisation to help the Council continually learn and achieve sustainable improvement and better outcomes for citizens, service users and our own workforce.

In developing our performance arrangements for 2022/23, we have considered the requirements of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act and have taken action to further strengthen self-assessment opportunities by building in performance challenge throughout the year, internally and externally as well as developing our internal 'insight'. This draws together performance, data and customer perception information (from the rolling annual consultation calendar) throughout the year alongside governance related insights (the internal and external audit work programme) to inform decisions. We have also reviewed our approach informed by the learning and identified best practice from colleagues across Wales in the first year of meeting the new performance requirements. We will do so each year to ensure our approach continues to evolve to reflect identified best practice.

- 1.3 Embedding this self-reflective approach as part of our performance management and governance arrangements has enabled us to build a robust evidence base for our annual self-assessment conclusions and will help to drive continuous improvement through our enhanced performance management arrangements.
- 1.4 The Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment 2022/23 is a position statement on the Council's performance over the past year in delivering its Annual Delivery Plan priorities as aligned to the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives. It is intended to provide an honest and balanced account of the Council's achievements and challenges and identifies areas where further progress is required. The information contained within the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment report will be used to inform the development of the Council's Annual Delivery Plan for 2024/25 and associated Service Plans for the same period.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1 The Annual Self-Assessment report is a requirement for Welsh Local Authorities under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 ('the Act').
- 2.2 Under the Act, the mechanism for a Council to keep its performance under review is self-assessment, with a duty to consult and publish a report setting out the conclusions of the self-assessment once in respect of every financial year.
- 2.3 In line with our requirement, the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Self-Assessment report 2022/23 (**Appendix A**) draws on a number of information sources to assess progress against our Well-being Objectives thus enabling us to identify how we can further enhance our internal processes and use of resources to support achievement of the Annual Delivery Plan commitments and our Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives.
- 2.4 These include: quarterly/annual performance and risk review reports associated with the key steps (actions) and performance metrics aligned to our Annual Delivery Plan and Well-being Objectives for 2022/23; findings from Internal Audit and Risk Work programme (Annual Internal Audit Report); key insights from the Annual Governance Statement and Internal Audit Opinion 2022/23; findings from the work of regulators and progress with our regulatory 'insight' tracker, which reviews monitors progress with implementing our regulatory recommendations;

Annual Directorate level Self-Assessments 2022/23; overview of engagement findings across Council services over the past year; staff engagement findings; assessments of organisational financial resilience and compliance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code.

- 2.5** Additionally, completion of ‘peer challenged’ Directorate Self-Assessments structured around how Directorate services are applying the five ways of working [Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015] in respect of the corporate enablers [people, finance (including procurement and commissioning), assets (physical and digital), performance and risk management, and insight and engagement] has enabled us to reflect on overall progress towards delivering the ADP’s commitments and identify what we are doing well, the outcomes we are achieving and the areas for improvement and future focus. Applying the five ways of working to the corporate enablers has also enabled us to identify the areas across the Council where we are doing well and those areas where we need to further embed this way of working in order to maximise our chances of achieving our Well-being Objectives and contribution to the national goals.
- 2.6** Reviewing this information has assisted us in developing a balanced picture of the Council’s improvement journey over the past year in delivering the ADP and has enabled us to identify areas for improvement which will inform the development of our Annual Delivery Plan for 2024/25.
- 2.7** The Draft Annual Self-Assessment report is structured around the Council’s four Well-being Objectives and has considered for each, the key in-year achievements aligned to the Annual Delivery Plan commitments, relevant engagement activities and public consultation activities, relevant regulatory review findings, the key challenges and areas for future focus. There is an overview of our use of resources informed by the annual Directorate Self-Assessments. This year we have included a summary of the progress update on the 2021/22 areas for improvement, which is a requirement that came into effect from the second year of self-assessments. Where possible we have benchmarked our performance against Welsh local authorities or other public sector datasets although this remains limited, and this remains an area of focus as we continue to develop and build our internal data and insight function. In response to elected Members’ feedback we have also incorporated a section which provides an overview of the findings and learning from various public engagement activities including, public sentiment on our performance gauged from social media posts, our Complaints and Compliments process and early headline data from our ongoing Public Opinion Survey thus ensuring greater visibility of how this has informed our self-assessment. We have also included a brief summary of our learning throughout the 2022/23 self-assessment process.
- 2.8** In line with our performance duties, we have engaged with key stakeholders throughout the year about what they think about our achievements and the areas we need to focus on in the coming year. We have also sought their views on whether our four Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives continue to remain relevant. Alongside this engagement work, we have continually reviewed the relevance of our Well-being Objectives through our Annual Performance Calendar of activities, focusing on intended outcomes, achievements and challenges. Through this work in 2022/23, we are assured that our Well-being

Objectives are appropriate and continue to remain relevant and align to the priorities in the Public Services Board's (PSB) Well-being Plan 2023-2028 and will continue to complement the work of the PSB going forward.

- 2.9** A further programme of engagement activities has been undertaken during September/ October 2023 via the Life in the Vale Public Opinion Survey (an online survey) and social media communications on the emerging Annual Self-Assessment findings. The Draft Self-Assessment report was also widely circulated with a request for comments from key partners including the Public Services Board and recognised Trade Unions via the Joint Consultative Forum.
- 2.10** The findings of our engagement activities are detailed in the consultation summary (**Appendix B**) and have been reflected within the appended Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment 2022/23 report (**Appendix A**).
- 2.11** This includes early headline findings from the ongoing Let's Talk about Life in the Vale Survey (with nearly 1,800 residents having completed the survey to date) and an overview of social media sentiment on Council engagement over the past year. It must be noted that the headline data does not reflect a representative cross-section of Vale citizens' views as engagement work remains ongoing to ensure we encourage participation from all parts of our community, especially traditionally hard to reach/engage/under-represented groups. The final survey analysis will reflect a wide range of views to inform our plans and service improvements and will be reported to Cabinet in the winter, with the full data being published. Work is required to evaluate and analyse the responses in order to ensure appropriate actions are put in place.
- 2.12** Overall, social media sentiment on our public engagement work over the past year presents a mixed picture. Social media interactions about our services, decision making and events especially on Facebook is generally positive and these typically come from posts sharing information about new Council facilities and services. However, we have also seen significant levels of negative engagement on interactions relating to changes to Council services, particularly those perceived as reductions.
- 2.13** Early headline findings from the Life in the Vale survey 2023 shows that the top concern (fairly or very concerned) for residents is the cost of living crisis (78%), next was services and support for older people (73.6%), followed by the climate emergency (68%), then nature emergency (65%). Services and support for children and young people (62%) was fifth on respondents list of concerns with employment opportunities of least concern (49%). These areas of concern align with the Council's critical challenges as identified in the current Annual Delivery Plan 2023/24. These relate to cost of living, Project Zero - the Council's climate and nature emergency response and organisational resilience, especially in meeting growing demand for core services. This gives some assurance that our areas of focus in the current year and those emerging from our Annual Self-Assessment findings are headed in the right direction in terms of our residents' priorities.
- 2.14** When asked to prioritise what amenities were most important to them, access to care and health services, a clean and tidy neighbourhood and ability to buy or rent a good quality home were the top three priorities for respondents. Ability to keep fit and healthy for free or at an affordable price, ability to take part in

formal learning to gain new skills, and access to arts, cultural or heritage events for free or at an affordable price were the three lowest priorities for respondents. The Council has a role, alongside others, to respond to these priorities and this will inform decision making on the forthcoming budget setting process and development of the Annual Delivery Plan.

- 2.15** In terms of their interaction with the Council, residents were asked if they know who their local Councillor is. 53% of respondents know who their Councillor is compared to 47% who do not know. When asked to what extent they were aware of the responsibilities of their local Councillors, 33% of respondents stated that they were aware of all the responsibilities of their local Councillor, just over 50% were aware of some responsibilities and nearly 17% were aware of none of the responsibilities of their local Councillor.
- 2.16** Residents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements about the Council. 27% of respondents stated that they slightly or strongly agreed that the services provided by the Council are of a high quality with nearly 49% of respondents strongly or slightly disagreeing with this statement. Nearly 24% of respondents slightly or strongly agreed that the Vale of Glamorgan Council acts in the interest of local residents. 55% respondents strongly or slightly disagreed with this statement.
- 2.17** In relation to, 'The Vale of Glamorgan Council takes residents' views into account when making a decision', nearly 15% respondents slightly or strongly agreed with this statement with 64% strongly or slightly disagreeing with this statement. Nearly 15% of respondents slightly or strongly agreed that the services provided by the Council represent good value for money. Nearly 61% of respondents strongly or slightly disagreed with this statement.
- 2.18** As reflected in our self-assessment findings, effective public engagement remains an area of continued focus for the Council. We will continue to improve how we communicate our financial and other challenges, involve and listen to residents and ensure that we are providing clear and simple explanations of how decisions have been taken and the impact they will have. In response to the emerging insights we have further strengthened the areas of future focus within our self-assessment and reviewed and revised our overall engagement score from 'Good' to 'Fair'.
- 2.19** As part of the engagement work, elected Members were also consulted on the draft Annual Self-Assessment report via Scrutiny Committees and the views of Members have been incorporated within the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment report 2022/23 as appropriate. No formal recommendations were made to Cabinet by the Healthy Living & Social Care, Learning & Culture and Environment & Regeneration Scrutiny Committees following their consideration of the Annual Self-Assessment report, with all three noting the report. In total, seven comments on the Annual Self-Assessment report are being referred to Cabinet following consideration by the Homes & Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee (4) and Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee. Scrutiny Committee comments have been addressed within the appended consultation summary report and reflected within the Final Draft Annual Self-Assessment 2022/23 Report.

- 2.20** In accordance with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, Governance & Audit Committee have played a specific role in contributing to the Annual Self-Assessment process and having reviewed a draft Annual Self-Assessment report on 18th September, 2023, referred their views and comments on the report to Cabinet (10 in total) which have been addressed within the appended consultation summary report and reflected in the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment 2022/23 report.
- 2.21** Alongside the engagement insight gleaned throughout the year, we have also evaluated a wide range of performance and other data insights from our annual planning and performance framework including the annual Directorate Self-Assessment and Peer Challenge process which has enabled us to draw conclusions on how well we are using our resources to support achievement of the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives.
- 2.22** Within this context, we believe that on balance **we have met our Annual Delivery Plan commitments for 2022/23, in what continued to be another challenging year for the Council and have attributed a judgement of ‘Good’**, reflecting the achievement of over 85% of in-year activities and performance targets. **We have judged our use of resources to be ‘Good’** because we have good evidence of how we have used our resources economically, efficiently, effectively and equitably to enhance performance, achieve outcomes and meet need and are in a strong position to secure future service improvements sustainably. From the review, assessment and on-going monitoring work undertaken throughout the year via the internal and external audit work programme as well the findings of the performance evaluation, **reasonable assurance can be given that the governance arrangements for the Vale of Glamorgan Council continue to be regarded as fit for purpose** in accordance with the governance framework.
- 2.23** Cabinet is asked to consider the consultation summary findings (**Appendix B**) and to review and endorse the updated Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment report 2022/23 (**Appendix A**)
- 2.24** Cabinet is recommended to refer this report to the Governance & Audit Committee for their consideration of the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment 2022/23 report (23rd October, 2023) and that any views of the Committee are referred back to Cabinet (2nd November, 2023) for final review with Cabinet then referring this report and the comments from Governance & Audit Committee on to Full Council (20th November, 2023) for consideration and approval. Should Governance & Audit Committee have no further comments to refer to Cabinet for consideration that the Final Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment report be referred to Full Council (20th November, 2023) for consideration and approval.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** Performance management and self-assessment is an intrinsic part of corporate governance and integrated business planning which underpins the delivery of the Council’s Well-being Objectives and associated annual commitments in its

Corporate and Annual Delivery Plan. The Council's Annual Performance Calendar and associated performance management and self-assessment processes are our key means of demonstrating how we are meeting the new performance requirements whilst contributing to the national well-being goals.

- 3.2** The Council's key plans and performance reports associated with the delivery of our Well-being Objectives have been structured around the Well-being of Future Generations Act's sustainable development principle to enable us to better evidence our contribution to the national goals.
- 3.3** The five ways of working are a key consideration in our corporate Performance Management Framework ensuring that we continue to focus on working differently and in an inclusive way to challenge why, what and how we respond to our key performance challenges. The five ways of working have been used as a structure within which to consider the Directorate Self-Assessments which form an important part of the evidence base for the production of the Council's Annual Self-Assessment report.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** There are no direct climate change and nature related implications associated with this report. The Corporate Plan and Annual Delivery Plan incorporate our key commitments which aim to have a positive impact on climate change and nature overall. However, failure to deliver on these commitments could impact negatively on achievement of our Well-being Objectives and in turn our contribution to the national goals and on any external regulatory assessments of the Council.
- 4.2** The climate change and nature implications related to the Council's activities are outlined in Project Zero (our Climate Change/carbon reduction programme) and identify the mitigating actions we intend to take to minimise the adverse consequences of our activities. It also includes key measures and targets that are monitored and regularly reported to all stakeholders to enable us to demonstrate and track progress towards achieving our key climate change and nature related commitments enroute to achieving net zero carbon status by 2030.
- 4.3** The responses to the Let's Talk survey to date indicate that climate change and nature are issues of concern to the public and this supports work to tackle climate change being highlighted by the Council as a critical challenge in the current Annual Delivery Plan.
- 4.4** The self-assessment report outlines our achievements from the past year and the key challenges, risks and opportunities for future years in relation to climate and nature emergencies. Further actions to mitigate these will be reflected in the Annual Delivery Plan 2024/25 and in associated service delivery plans for the same period.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1** Our priorities as outlined in the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives have resources committed to their achievement (via the Medium-Term Financial Plan and the annual budget review process) or the likely prospect of resources being made available in the period of the plan.
- 5.2** Corporate Health aspects of Service Plans (how we are using our resources to achieve our well-being objectives), quarterly performance monitoring and annual reviews of performance and governance arrangements provide Members with an overview of the way in which Council resources (people, finance, assets, engagement and insight) are used to support delivery of our well-being objectives. These considerations have been extensively examined as part of the Directorate Self-Assessment process.
- 5.3** The Self-Assessment will inform the report to Cabinet on the Council's Budget for 2024/25 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy Refresh.

Employment

- 5.4** There are no direct workforce related implications associated with this report although the self-assessment findings identify the key employment challenges, risks and opportunities for future years both within the Council and externally across the Vale. Further actions to mitigate these will be reflected in the Annual Delivery Plan 2026/25 and in associated service delivery plans for the same period.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.5** Self-assessment is a statutory duty under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021, along with a duty to publish a report setting out the conclusions of the self-assessment once in respect of every financial year. Further, each year the Council must publish an annual report showing the progress it has made in meeting its Well-being Objectives.
- 5.6** The self-assessment findings identify the key challenges, risks and opportunities for future years and many of these will have equality implications. Actions to mitigate these will be reflected in the Annual Delivery Plan 2024/25 and in associated service delivery plans for the same period. These actions will have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics, in line with our duties under the Equality Act 2010. Also, under this Act (section 1), due consideration will be given to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome resulting from socio-economic disadvantage.

6. Background Papers

Cabinet Report: [Local Government & Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021](#)

Cabinet Report: [Statutory Guidance: Part 6, Chapter 1, Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021](#)

Cabinet Report: [Vale of Glamorgan Annual Performance Calendar Elected Member Workshop on Annual Self-Assessment](#)

1.0 Executive Leader & Chief Executive Introduction

Cllr. Lis Burnett, Executive Leader of the Council and Rob Thomas, Chief Executive

The Annual Self-Assessment Report evaluates what we have done during the past year within the context of our Annual Delivery Plan 2022/23 and the Corporate Plan 2020-2025 Well-being Objectives and is a fundamental part of our governance framework. Corporate governance is about doing the right things in the right way and demonstrating valid reasons for our actions and decisions. **This end of year summary of progress relates to the Council's Annual Delivery Plan commitments for 2022/23 which have been informed by Vale residents and our key partners ensuring that we have prioritised the services that matter to residents, especially the most vulnerable members of our community**



As a public body, we are responsible for ensuring that our business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and is used economically, efficiently, effectively and equitably, to improve the social, economic environmental and cultural well-being of Vale of Glamorgan citizens and contribute to the national well-being goals.

We have evaluated a wide range of performance and data insights from our annual planning and performance framework which has enabled us to draw conclusions on how well we are using our resources to support achievement of the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives. Within this context, we believe that **on balance we have met our Annual Delivery Plan commitments for 2022/23**, in what continued to be another challenging year for the Council.



Our communities, still recovering from the impacts of Covid-19 have faced new challenges, most acutely the rising cost of living. This was also the year where we saw the devastating humanitarian impact of the war in Ukraine. Despite the challenges we faced the Council has continued to be ambitious for our citizens and strived to deliver the very best. It has been another challenging year, but it is one where yet again we have seen just what is possible when we work together with our partners and communities. This report is an opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved in the past 12 months, and how we have worked to support our citizens and businesses in 2022/23. At the heart of everything we do is working together

with our public sector partners, local businesses, voluntary and community sector, and most importantly our citizens – we cannot deliver our ambitions alone.

Over the past year we have made good progress in delivering key priorities including: engaging with our communities to develop Placemaking plans for our four main towns and a Local Energy Plan as part of supporting our communities and investing in our regeneration assets; joined a Procurement Shared Service arrangement with Cardiff, Monmouthshire and Torfaen Councils to strengthen service resilience and maximise opportunities to achieve savings through procurement with a specific focus on social value, carbon reduction and supporting local employment; worked with our communities and the third sector on a range of different projects, including the mobilisation and delivery of warm spaces, food support, tackling loneliness and isolation and used these as an opportunity to engage on other topics which will further strengthen our working relationships. We have increased the choice available to vulnerable adult residents to support and improve their well-being through the 'Your Choice' initiative. This saw us transitioning eleven domiciliary care agencies into the initiative with 235 citizens supported by 3700 hours of outcome focussed care and support at home each week. Our 24/7 Falls Response Service has responded to over 500 falls since service its inception in October 2022,

reducing attendances to Accident & Emergency by 440 with an estimated saving of £547K to the Health Board. We supported community led projects through nearly £180K of Strong Communities Fund, which has benefitted communities; achieved the Silver Youth Work Quality Mark in recognition of high quality and impactful provision for young people; further increased capacity of Welsh medium education with an additional 210 primary places at the new Barry waterfront development (Ysgol Sant Baruc) and an additional 299 secondary places at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg. We progressed an ambitious project to reduce homelessness through effective tenant and accommodation support which saw very few incidences of rough sleeping in the Vale of Glamorgan; and strengthened community safety through full replacement of the Council's CCTV system and operational arrangements.

There have also been positive achievements that have contributed to Project Zero (our response to the climate and nature emergencies) including: successfully secured £600K of funding to support Bus Stop improvements across the Vale to encourage active travel; worked collaboratively to achieve Bronze Sustainable Food Places status for the Vale of Glamorgan; improved waste facilities by opening a new Resource Recovery Facility to process source separated recycling material, a new reuse shop, extended the rollout of new recycling arrangements and increased the range of kerbside recyclables to increase citizen participation and meet national recycling targets; ensured 100% of our electricity was purchased from renewable sources to enable us to achieve our carbon reduction commitments.

These achievements would not have been possible without the dedication of our colleagues, partners and volunteers who have remained flexible and agile, working together to respond to our challenges whilst protecting our most vulnerable citizens and supporting our communities.

Our most critical challenges which the Council have an important role in addressing arise from the cost-of-living crisis, climate emergency (Project Zero) and ensuring our organisational resilience. Like many local authorities, we still face financial challenges, but we are a well-run council and continue to keep our finances in as strong a position as possible. Over recent years, through an ambitious programme of transformation we have been able to evolve our ways of working and deliver financial efficiencies and more carbon efficient services which will provide a solid foundation for ensuring the sustainability of much valued services for the future. However, we recognise that balancing the books will be harder than ever in future and we need to significantly accelerate this work if we are to develop innovative and effective community-based solutions to meet the growing demand for our services. We are strengthening our use of data insight alongside further deployment of technology to help us make informed decisions and deliver a measured response to our challenges. Our strengthened partnerships with communities as well as the third and private sectors will be critical to success.

As we look back on the successes of the past year and towards the challenges and opportunities of the next, **we thank all those** who have again come together to work for the well-being of the Vale of Glamorgan and its citizens. We will continue to work together to deliver our vision of **strong communities with a bright future** for all.

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3.0 Our Critical Challenges

The world of local government continues to experience unprecedented challenges as we manoeuvre through the legacy costs of the effects of the pandemic. Furthermore, we continue to respond to the ongoing humanitarian and global security issues arising from the war in Ukraine, an escalation of the climate change and nature emergency, and the global energy and cost of living crisis. The economic effects and uncertainties associated with Brexit also continue to present challenges. The picture is one of significant and complex competing pressures that include funding challenges, sustaining green economic growth, integrated service provision challenges and a rising demand and complexity for our services with increasing costs associated with their provision. Throughout this we have demonstrated our resilience by employing good management of limited resources (people, assets, finance), ensured that our financial stressors are understood and contained, and that vital services continue to be delivered. Our focus has and will continue to be on those priorities that matter most to our residents, thereby protecting services for the most vulnerable in our communities. To that effect, we have identified a number of critical challenges that have shaped our planned activities and form part of a collective effort (with our partners) to meet these challenges.

Cost of Living Crisis: The cost of living crisis continues to gain momentum and is increasingly putting financial pressure on households. Heightened energy prices, rising transport and food costs are driving up inflation and impacting us all but are hitting poorer households hardest. While a number of schemes have been introduced to ease the burden on households, there is concern that growing pressures from increases in the costs of living could further embed inequalities in the Vale of Glamorgan. Price increases squeeze wages and income related benefit support, particularly impacting poorest households who have the least capacity within their budgets to mitigate these increases. There are concerns that as these pressures mount more households may be forced into formal and informal debt and be pushed into fuel and food poverty, impacting physical and mental well-being. The cost of living is expected to rise further during the immediate to medium term and we will need to support our communities and citizens to navigate and overcome the worst impacts of this crisis, with a particular focus on safeguarding our most deprived and vulnerable citizens. We will do this by working collaboratively with a range of partners including schools, housing associations, community and third sector organisations to join up services to ensure that people can access a range of services, support and advice in one place. We will involve people in what we are doing to ensure we are reaching those people who need our support most.

Climate Emergency (Project Zero): In July 2019 the Vale of Glamorgan Council joined with Welsh Government and other Councils across the UK in declaring a global 'climate emergency' in response to the findings of the IPCC 'Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C' (October 2018). Since then, we have continued to make changes across the organisation and to embark on ambitious projects to reduce our carbon emissions. Work to address this challenge includes reviewing the Local Development Plan and development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy, improvements to our housing, schools and other buildings, the promotion of active travel and public transport and installation of electric vehicle charging points as well as a focus on procurement and community engagement. We are exploring the potential of community energy schemes, implementing a new Waste Management Strategy, the Shoreline Management Plan and a revised Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. We have brought all of this work together as Project Zero and we will continue to work with the community and our partners to make the necessary changes, focusing on energy, waste, food, buildings, transport, land use and procurement. Our key target is to reduce the Council's carbon emissions to net zero by 2030 but we also want to influence and encourage others to reduce their emissions and to be part of Project Zero. **While the Council is making progress in aligning its budget spending with its Project Zero commitments, the current short term national funding approaches mean that there is no sustainable long-term financial strategy in place to support the Council and its partners in delivering the Project Zero commitments. The ongoing cost-of-living crisis, economic and financial uncertainties continue to place significant pressure on our ability to deliver core local authority services, distracting focus and reducing our ability to invest in the net zero agenda. This includes our capacity to engage with our communities to support the delivery of Project Zero**

commitments. The Council and its partners lack the capacity, expertise and skills required to deliver the Project Zero commitments. In addition, there is a lack of timely and comprehensive carbon data insights to inform our decisions for the long term in relation to delivery of Project Zero. Despite these these challenges, we will continue to work with partners across all sectors to develop a sustainable approach to funding our Project Zero ambitions, mobilising resources to ensure that we have the workforce capability and capacity to deliver our green ambitions over the long term.

Organisational resilience: The Council's financial position remains challenging at a time when there is increasing demand and complexity for services and a need to support those most in need. The Council is also highly susceptible to increasing cost pressures associated with inflation, including the rising cost of construction materials, food supplies, energy costs and staff wages of which will all have an impact on the costs of service delivery. This could challenge our ability as a Council to maintain levels of service delivery and deliver key priorities such as Project Zero, the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme, Council Housing Programme and other transformation projects. In response to Covid-19, we successfully adapted to new ways of working and adopted new service delivery models, we will need to continue to transform how we work and how best we can maintain services both in the short and longer term. Becoming more resilient will require greater innovation in the way we work, embracing new models that enable us to deliver services in an agile way. We will need to address a number of cost pressures, including becoming a 'living wage' employer, meeting the needs of an increasingly ageing population and a growing number of children and young people presenting with mental well-being and complex additional learning needs. Our staff are our greatest asset, and we need to ensure we can attract and retain the best people. We face many workforce challenges across a range of services in line with the national picture and we will need to ensure we are providing a competitive offer in order to recruit and retain people in an inclusive way that embraces diversity and improves performance. We will continue to review the viability and sustainability of services in response to ongoing significant financial challenges and uncertainty. We will focus on using our assets more efficiently, push forward our digital agenda, develop and support our workforce, and take commercial opportunities where they add value and protect our services. We will take many and varied approaches, working with partners across all sectors to increase our resilience enabling us to deliver our Well-being Objectives. Integral transforming how we work is the need to involve and engage with our staff, residents, partners and other stakeholders. Effective change and increased resilience will only be possible by working in partnership and listening to a range of voices. We will remain focused on the diverse needs of our communities.

4.0 Our Self-Assessment Report

How it all fits together

Our [Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives](#) set out the outcomes the Council wants to achieve which reflect the administration's political priorities, our shared aspirations and commitments with public service partners (e.g. the Public Services Board's Well-being Plan and the Cardiff & Vale Area Plan) and Vale citizens, and provide a framework for improving well-being in the Vale of Glamorgan over the medium term.

Our Well-being Objectives for 2022/23 are:

- To work with and for our communities.
- To support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth.
- To support people at home and in their community.
- To respect, enhance and enjoy our environment.

Our [Annual Delivery Plan](#) published each Spring, sets out the steps we will take in-year to deliver on our Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives and achieve our vision of **Strong Communities with a Bright Future**.

These steps are translated into actions through an integrated planning process and detailed in Service, Team Plans and staff appraisals (#itsaboutme) across the Council and form the basis for our annual corporate framework of activities, performance measures and service, team and individual improvement targets. Progress against our ADP commitments and our Well-being objectives is reflected in quarterly performance monitoring reports that are subject to internal challenge via the Strategic Leadership Team and elected members through Scrutiny Committees, Governance & Audit Committee and Cabinet. Monitoring of progress against these steps provides an understanding of what has been achieved and where further work is required.

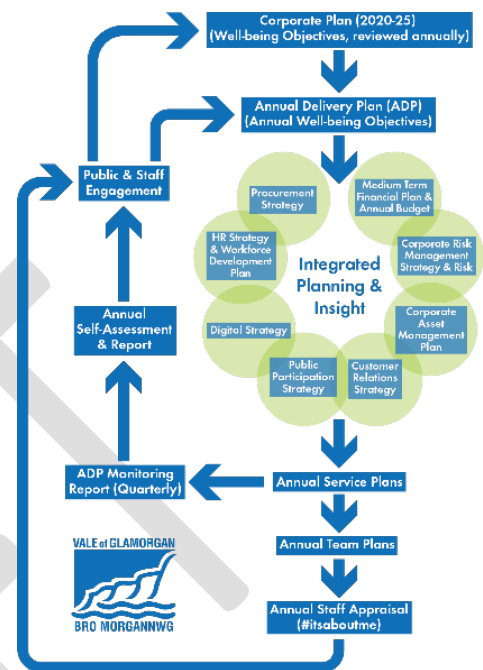
The Annual Self-Assessment Report provides an end of year summary of the progress made in delivering the Annual Delivery Plan commitments aligned to our four Well-being Objectives.

It is important that our approach to self-assessment continues to evolve to drive improvement as aligned to our Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives. To enhance our internal challenge, the Strategic Leadership Team regularly considers performance updates on the Council's Annual Performance Calendar of activities which enables them to challenge approaches and make recommendations for improvement. An annual programme of Elected members workshops aligned to the Calendar has extended the breath of member participation and has enabled them to shape our approach and the information that they received to enable them to undertake their critical friend role effectively.

How have we assessed our performance?

Our existing annual performance management and governance arrangements are our key means of meeting our new performance duties. Our approach to self-assessment is integrated within these arrangements which provide opportunities throughout the year for internal and external performance challenge thus enabling us to review at any point in time, how well we are achieving our Well-being Objectives. Alongside these arrangements, we are also developing our internal insight which draws together performance, risk, data and

How it all fits together



public engagement information throughout the year alongside governance related insights from internal and external audit work programmes which has helped provide a robust evidence base for the annual self-assessment conclusions. Elected members have influenced the format, content and presentation of this information throughout the year during a mix of informal and formal sessions, including briefings and Committee meetings.

A wide variety of Information sources have helped to inform our self-assessment judgements and areas for future focus. These can be found [here](#):

Context of our judgements

Informed by the evidence gathered, we have assessed our progress using the scales below. It is important that our judgements are not considered in isolation as they affect each other and need to be considered in an integrated way.

[Annual Delivery Plan](#)

In measuring how we are doing on our Annual Delivery Plan commitments, we consider the following to come to a judgement:

- evidence in relation to delivery of planned activities;
- performance in relation to a suite of performance indicators and associated improvement targets;
- engagement and consultation feedback from key stakeholders;
- Views of our regulators and auditors

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
-----------	------	------	------

[Use of Resources: Assessment of Corporate Enablers](#)

In measuring how well we are using our resources, we consider the following to come to a judgement:

- People
- Assets (Physical and Digital)
- Finance (including procurement and commissioning)
- Engagement and insight
- Performance management
- Risk management

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
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[Governance](#)

In measuring how well we are run (governance), alongside the above, we also consider the following to come to a judgement:

- Annual Governance Statement, based on CIPFA's, 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' principles
- Head of Internal Audit's Annual Opinion on the Council's control environment in relation to governance, risk management and internal Control
- Internal Audit & Assurance Work Programme findings
- Audit Work Programme findings (including assurance work the financial systems and the wider control environment)

Substantial	Reasonable	Limited	None
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Review of our Well-being Objectives

Each year Vale citizens, Council staff, elected members and other key partners help to shape the steps we will take to achieve our Well-being Objectives through our Annual Delivery Plan commitments. Through this process they are asked to confirm the relevance of our Well-being Objectives. In addition, annually, through our integrated planning and performance management arrangements, we continually review the relevance of our Well-being Objectives, focusing on the intended outcomes, achievements, and challenges. Through this work in 2022/23 we are assured that our Well-being Objectives are appropriate and continue to remain relevant to the priorities outlined in the Public Services Board’s (PSB) Well-being Plan 2023-2028 and will continue to complement the work of the PSB going forward.

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5.0 Our Progress against last year's Areas of Focus

In our 2021/22 Annual Self-Assessment we identified a series of areas that we wished to focus on in the 2022/23 year. Below is an update on the work we have undertaken, and the next steps.

- Worked with the [Local Government Association](#) to enhance our strategic workforce planning model in response to feedback from our regulators as part of the Springing Forward review.
- Undertook targeted work across council services to strengthen our approach to talent management, broaden the skills base to help address identified gaps and plan the skillsets required for future operating models.
- Introduced a programme to improve career options for young people as part of taking a long-term approach to workforce planning. We have promoted the uptake of apprenticeships with 11 active apprentices in roles across the Council. There has been positive take up of the Kick Start programme with 41 16-24 year olds participating and 8 going on to permanent roles within the Council. Our new Vale Quick Start programme has also seen 6 young people take up opportunities within the council with 4 securing full-time employment. The next round of opportunities are being established.
- The Shared Regulatory Services has been at the forefront of taking forward the Directors of Public Protection Wales 'Building for the Future' Strategy, and in making the case to Welsh Government for a regulatory apprenticeship in Wales to create a route into regulatory services for young people. This work will help address recruitment and retention challenges within the sector.
- Increased focus on digitalisation programmes such as Oracle Fusion, Microsoft 365, HR Dashboards, IDev across the Council as part of developing workforce skills and capacity to deliver our priorities.
- Undertook a review of our pay structures, however affordability presents significant challenges. Established a Rewards and Benefits forum to review the current offer.
- Introduced policies and new technology to support the Council's new hybrid working model contributing to increased flexibility to meet service needs and improved staff recruitment and retention.
- Enhanced our employee Well-being Programme (Eich Icheyd) by increasing the number of Well-being Champions (from 45 to 65) and the skills of the Occupational Health Teams to provide a wider range of services and events for our employees following feedback from our Employee Survey. These include a menopause café, bespoke trauma informed training, community well-being sessions, monthly woodland walk sessions, walk and talk amongst many well-being events and activities.
- Rolled out Race Awareness training organisation-wide, starting with all senior managers. This is in line with our commitment to build a diverse workforce that confidently challenges racism and racial bias.
- Collaborated with SOCITM to develop a new Digital Strategy, roadmap and new target operating model for the Council to support delivery of our Well-being Objectives.
- Developed a rolling Digital Infrastructure Renewal and Investment Programme for the Council and schools.
- Introduced new technology to facilitate hybrid Council and Committee meetings for members, with streaming accessible to the public.
- Increased accessibility to services via digital means. The high take up of services demonstrates that they have been designed in a way that residents have found easy to find and use. For example, digital medication in our residential homes; a new service to support the Council's cost of living crisis response; use of QR codes to access planning site notices; more application processes online e.g. Unpaid Carers Support, Winter Fuel Payments, Discretionary Grant Applications amongst others.
- In line with our commitment to decarbonise our assets, we continued to purchase 100% of our electricity from renewable sources; installed Automatic Water meters on our asset portfolio to understand water usage better at each site; rolled out LED lighting schemes on our buildings and have more planned for the coming year; installed solar panels on 23 buildings with a combined capacity of almost 1 Megawatt with more planned for the coming year; installed electric vehicle charging stations at two of our primary office sites and on selected school sites; commenced the survey of community buildings (24) we have leased out to identify opportunities to support their decarbonisation.

- Adopted a new 5 year Corporate Asset Management Plan to support our strategic Asset Management decisions with an emphasis on decarbonisation of our estate.
- Undertook a Corporate Landlord Model review to inform work to streamline our asset management activities.
- Reviewed our School Reorganisation and Investment programme to reflect the impact of Brexit/Covid on delivering the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme. Engaged with communities to inform new proposals for the next programme of school investment.
- Continued to develop our use of Welsh Community Care Information System with a focus on timely and proportionate recording and quality assurance to manage performance, inform and improve service delivery and customer experience.
- Enhanced telecare services with the introduction of a 24/7 Falls Response Service which responded to over 500 falls since service inception in October 2022. Reduced attendances to A&E by 440 with an estimated saving of £547K to the Health Board.
- Extended the Smart Home scheme to enhance independence and support well-being. Two SMART homes are fully operational, one to be ready by Autumn 2023 and further 6 flats to be completed in 2024/25.
- Developed a new policy on the management of damp and condensation in domestic Council properties to ensure we provide safe and healthy homes for our tenants.
- Built on our flagship Maker Space in Penarth, extending the highly successful blueprint in Barry Library. Makerspaces are designed give our citizens and learners a space to develop their skills and creativity.
- Engaged with communities to progress work on developing a Placemaking plan for our four main towns and a local Energy plan as part of supporting our communities and investing in our regeneration assets.
- Lobbied Welsh Government via the WLGA and Leader networks for genuine multi-year financial settlements.
- Undertook a forensic review of current and long-term financial pressures as part of financial planning and budget setting, and published a rolling 5 year Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- Adopted a new Procurement Policy & Strategy which places a greater focus on social value in contracts and carbon reduction and supporting local employment. Our Contract Procedure Rules have been updated to include a minimum requirement for a social value component in tender evaluation.
- Progressed work on a Non-Treasury Investment Strategy which will be launched during 2023/24.
- Established a Procurement Shared Service arrangement with Cardiff, Monmouthshire and Torfaen Councils to strengthen service resilience and maximise opportunities to achieve savings through procurement, including streamlining procurement processes.
- In response to feedback from our regulators as part of the Leisure Contract review, we undertook community mapping for leisure activities as part of work to embed the Sustainable Development principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act in our leisure provision. We also undertook work which showed that we are providing value for money and remain the only local authority in Wales receiving an income from the operation of its leisure centres.
- Strengthened challenge to schools and their governing bodies on financial positions and are working with nine schools that out turned a deficit position.
- Further strengthened collaboration across the Council to identify and maximise opportunities to access and effective use of grant funding to deliver positive outcomes for citizens for the long term.
- Enhanced investment in Welsh language provision to Vale citizens to participation opportunities especially for young people in response to mapping work undertaken.
- Co-produced with stakeholders partners including young people a Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Strategy. Work is progressing on developing a child friendly document. Responded to growing demand for SEMH services by increasing provision however demand continues to grow as the service becomes more established.
- Worked with Cardiff & Vale UHB to further integrate social care and health services to provide seamless access to health, social care and well-being support for all adult Vale citizens. As part of the Vale Alliance, we have agreed a governance structure, successfully recruited a Vale Locality Manager and are progressing 3 priorities – the Well-being Matters Service, Vale Community Resource Service and Third Sector Contracts.

- Established the Participate Programme to deliver the key commitments in our Public Participation Strategy, including establishing a post to progress participation and campaign management activity, rolling out the use of 'Bang the Table' as the single digital hub for engagement and participation activities, establishing a Community of Practice Network that is making close links with the Equalities Consultative Forum and a Member Champions group. As part of work to promote participation, a new e-petition scheme has also been introduced and promoted to residents and staff.
- Worked with the community and third sector on a range of different projects, including the mobilisation and delivery of warm spaces, food support, support to tackle loneliness and isolation, and used these as an opportunity to engage on other topics.
- Effectively collaborated to deliver the Discretionary Cost of Living scheme, Direct Food Support Grant, Warm Spaces funding, and provide cost of living information for residents and staff. 8,000 calls have been received on the dedicated Cost of Living support line with over 10,000 online applications for financial support.
- Supported organisations working to address the long-term challenge of the legacy costs of the pandemic which have also become inextricably linked with the cost-of-living crisis. For example, we have provided additional funding to Citizens Advice, and facilitated grants to schools, community and third sectors to provide support and assistance.
- Through strong partnership working, made significant strides in our transition to a fully 'Your Choice' outcome focused domiciliary care council. So far, we have transitioned eleven domiciliary care agencies to Your Choice, with 235 citizens supported by 3,700 hours of outcome focussed care and support at home each week.
- The Well-being Matters Service is developing working protocols to share information and expertise to ensure a seamless delivery of health, social care and well-being responses to people accessing the service.
- Increased health and well-being resources published on Dewis Cymru with Health and Well-being services in the Vale received over quarter of a million detailed views in 2022/23 (253,194 views, up by 26.6% from 2021/22).
- Progressed an ambitious project to reduce homelessness through effective tenant and accommodation support which saw very few incidences of rough sleeping in the Vale of Glamorgan.




Areas where further work is required

- Address the ongoing recruitment and retention challenges in key service areas such as Social Care Services, Shared Regulatory Services and Neighbourhood Services and Transport.
- Revise our Leisure approach to further enhance participation once the regional arrangements for the delivery of Sports Wales funding has been agreed.
- Further strengthen our challenge of the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service to ensure effective support to our schools to deliver the required impact and improvements in terms of raising attainment and well-being overall. Since February 2022, 3 schools have gone into Estyn Follow-up category.
- Strengthen mechanisms to improve inclusivity of our engagement especially from 'seldom heard' groups to shape and inform service design and development.
- Continue to work towards our vision of schools being at the heart of the community, offering a wide range of community services.
- Despite the collaborative approach taken, very high levels of demand for Children and Young People's placements has impacted negatively on achieving desired reductions and we have become further reliant on externally purchased care, particularly independent fostering agency placements where availability has also visibly decreased.
- Further enhance citizens access points to our services via digital means.
- Continue to work innovatively with external social care providers to help shape quality provision to meet local needs. Despite positive working relationships, provider failure remains a concern given their capacity and ability to respond to growing demand whilst they continue to be subjected to growing workforce and cost of living pressures.




- Further strengthen capacity to support our integrated approach to use of performance and data insight to support decision making.
- Progress work to develop an Investment Strategy for our physical assets with a focus on net zero/low carbon and long-term sustainability as part of Project Zero.
- Embed our use of the integrated hybrid meeting technology to improve participation in local democracy in line with our public participation priorities.
- Improve how we communicate our financial and other challenges, involve and listen to residents and ensure that we are providing clear and simple explanations of how decisions have been taken and the impact they will have on citizens.

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6.0 Our performance against the Annual Delivery Plan 2022/23




Presented below is a **summary of our performance** in relation to our four Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives and overall performance of the Annual Delivery Plan 2022/23. The Direction of Travel provides an indication of the direction of performance when compared with the previous quarter. For instance, where our performance status (RAG) has improved it is indicated by , where our performance status has remained the same compared with previous quarter it is shown by  and where our performance status has declined it is represented with .


At end of 2022/23, the overall performance (RAG) status for the Annual Delivery Plan as aligned to our Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives is **GOOD**. This judgement reflects the good progress made in relation to meeting our Annual Delivery Plan commitments for the period with 87% of planned activities achieved.

Combined total of Service Plan Actions and Performance Measures	PERFORMANCE STATUS			Overall RAG Status for all Well-being Objectives
	 GREEN	 AMBER	 RED	
Total	Actions & Measures	Actions & Measures	Actions & Measures	Actions and Measures
388	335 (87%)	5 (1%)	48 (12%)	GREEN

All four Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives have been attributed a **GOOD** performance status at end of year to reflect the progress made to date. Overall, the direction of travel has remained static for all Annual Delivery Plan actions aligned with our four Well-being Objectives when compared with the previous quarter (quarter 3). Although, for performance measures there has been an improvement in the measures associated with Well-being Objective 1 when compared with the previous quarter.

ADP (Actions)	RAG	Direction of Travel
Objective 1	G	
Objective 2	G	
Objective 3	G	
Objective 4	G	
All ADP Actions	G	

ADP (Performance Measures)	RAG	Direction of Travel
Objective 1	A	
Objective 2	G	
Objective 3	A	
Objective 4	A	
All ADP PIs	A	

ADP (Actions + Measures combined)	RAG	Direction of Travel
Objective 1	G	
Objective 2	G	
Objective 3	G	
Objective 4	G	
Overall ADP	G	

6.1 Our contribution to the national Well-being Goals

Below are our commitments to improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of our citizens as outlined in our Corporate Plan 2020-2025. By embedding the five ways of working throughout our planning and decision-making processes, we are working in a more sustainable way to deliver on these commitments and contributing to the national well-being goals as detailed below.

The long term nature of some commitments mean that the impact of work undertaken in the past year may not always be demonstrable in the short term and will impact over the longer term. Consequently, these commitments remain long term strategic priorities for the Council as we progress the Corporate Plan 2020-25 involving our partners and communities in ‘working together for a brighter future’.



Work with and for our communities (WBO1)	Support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth (WBO2)	Support people at home and in their community (WBO3)	Respect, enhance and enjoy our environment (WBO4)
<p>Improve how we involve, engage and communicate with others about our work and decisions</p> <p><i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i></p>	<p>Ensure there is appropriate access to quality early years, nursery and education provision enabling people to achieve their best possible outcomes whatever their age</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Globally Responsible Wales</i> <i>Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	<p>Encourage people of all ages to have active and healthy lifestyles to promote better physical and mental well-being</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Resilient Wales</i> <i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	<p>Work to reduce the organisation’s carbon emissions to net zero before 2030 and encourage others to follow our lead as part of minimising the negative impact of our activities on the environment</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Resilient Wales</i> <i>Globally Responsible Wales</i></p>

Work with and for our communities (WBO1)	Support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth (WBO2)	Support people at home and in their community (WBO3)	Respect, enhance and enjoy our environment (WBO4)
<p>Work innovatively, using technology, resources and our assets to transform our services so they are sustainable for the future</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i></p>	<p>Invest in our schools to provide the right learning environment for the 21st century and facilities which benefit the wider community</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Globally Responsible Wales</i> <i>Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	<p>Provide more opportunities for cycling and walking and develop a range of travel options to encourage people out of their cars</p> <p><i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>Globally Responsible Wales</i></p>	<p>Work with and empower community groups and other partners to sustain local facilities including public toilets, libraries, parks, play areas and community centres</p> <p><i>Resilient Wales</i> <i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i></p>
<p>Develop our strong culture of good customer service aligned to the Council's values of being ambitious, open, together and proud</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i></p>	<p>Work with schools, families and others to improve the services and support for those with additional learning needs</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	<p>Promote leisure, art and cultural activities which meet a diverse range of needs</p> <p><i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	<p>Protect, preserve and where possible enhance our natural and built environment and cultural heritage</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Resilient Wales</i> <i>Globally Responsible Wales</i></p>
<p>Promote equality of opportunity and work with the community to ensure we are responsive to the diverse needs of our customers</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Globally Responsible Wales</i> <i>Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	<p>Work with education, training providers, businesses and other agencies to provide a range of advice, support and training opportunities which improve people's skills and readiness for work</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Globally Responsible Wales</i> <i>Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	<p>Work in partnership to provide more seamless health and social care services</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	<p>Work with the community and partners to ensure the local environment is clean, attractive and well managed</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Resilient Wales</i> <i>Globally Responsible Wales</i></p>

Work with and for our communities (WBO1)	Support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth (WBO2)	Support people at home and in their community (WBO3)	Respect, enhance and enjoy our environment (WBO4)
<p>Promote the use of the Welsh Language and contribute to the Welsh Government target of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050</p> <p><i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	<p>Work with partners to ensure people can access appropriate money advice, information and debt support relating to housing, benefits, education, training and employment</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Resilient Wales</i> <i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	<p>Provide care and support to children and families in need which reflects their individual strengths and circumstances</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	<p>Work with the community, developers and others to ensure that new developments are sustainable and that developers mitigate their impacts, integrate with local communities and provide necessary infrastructure</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Globally Responsible Wales</i></p>
<p>Support the development and well-being of our staff and recognise their contribution to the work of the Council</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Globally Responsible Wales</i></p>	<p>Support and promote volunteering and community learning recognising the range of benefits to individuals and the community</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Resilient Wales</i> <i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Globally Responsible Wales</i> <i>Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	<p>Provide person-centred care and support to adults in need</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	<p>Provide effective waste management services and work with our residents, partners and businesses to minimise waste and its impact on the environment</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Resilient Wales</i> <i>Globally Responsible Wales</i></p>
<p>Ensure we have robust governance and scrutiny arrangements in place and support our elected members to fulfil their roles</p> <p><i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Globally Responsible Wales</i></p>	<p>Work as part of the Cardiff Capital Region to progress strategic planning and transport initiatives and promote sustainable economic growth and employment</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Globally Responsible Wales</i></p>	<p>Work with our partners to ensure timely and appropriate mental health and emotional well-being support</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales</i> <i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>More Equal Wales</i> <i>Cohesive Wales</i> <i>Globally Responsible Wales</i> <i>Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	<p>Minimise pollution recognising the detrimental impact it may have on the environment and people's wellbeing</p> <p><i>Healthier Wales</i> <i>Globally Responsible Wales</i></p>

Work with and for our communities (WBO1)	Support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth (WBO2)	Support people at home and in their community (WBO3)	Respect, enhance and enjoy our environment (WBO4)
	<p>Support economic growth through regeneration, improved infrastructure and support for town centres, tourism and industry</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales More Equal Wales Globally Responsible Wales</i></p>	<p>Undertake our safeguarding duties to protect people from harm</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales Resilient Wales Healthier Wales Equal Wales Cohesive Wales</i></p>	<p>Work to reduce the impact of erosion, flooding and pollution on our coastal areas and watercourses</p> <p><i>Resilient Wales Globally Responsible Wales</i></p>
		<p>Work in partnership to develop cohesive communities and promote community safety</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales Healthier Wales Equal Wales Cohesive Wales Globally Responsible Wales Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	
		<p>Keep people safe through strong and resilient emergency planning and regulatory services which protect the public, consumers and business</p> <p><i>Resilient Wales Healthier Wales Cohesive Wales Globally Responsible Wales</i></p>	
		<p>Increase the supply of good quality, accessible and affordable housing by working in partnership to address housing need</p> <p><i>Prosperous Wales Resilient Wales Healthier Wales Equal Wales Cohesive Wales Globally Responsible Wales Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language</i></p>	

Work with and for our communities (WBO1)	Support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth (WBO2)	Support people at home and in their community (WBO3)	Respect, enhance and enjoy our environment (WBO4)
		Provide housing advice and support to prevent homelessness <i>Healthier Wales More Equal Wales</i>	

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6.3 Our Annual Delivery Plan Performance by Well-being Objective

WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 1: To work with and for our communities

We are committed to working in partnership to ensure services meet the needs of our residents and local communities and to leaving a positive legacy for future generations.

Actions and Measures aligned to Well-being Objective 1		PERFORMANCE STATUS						Overall RAG Status for Well-being Objective 1
		Green		Amber		Red		
Actions	Measures	Actions	Measures	Actions	Measures	Actions	Measures	Actions and Measures
134	15	118(88%)	8 (53%)	0	1 (7%)	16(12%)	6 (40%)	GREEN

Overall performance (RAG) status for Well-being Objective 1 is **GOOD**. This judgement reflects the good progress made in relation to meeting our Annual Delivery Plan commitments for the period.

What We said we'd do

What we said we'd do	Performance Status
1 Make effective use of our assets and technology to improve our services and how we communicate.	Green
2 Publish a Public Participation Strategy that enables and encourages greater involvement for residents and other stakeholders in decision making.	Green
3 Support increasing numbers of young people to be engaged in a wider range of participation opportunities and with decision making within the Council.	Green
4 Build momentum around the Climate Change Community Conversation and the nature emergency involving different stakeholder groups to shape our plans and encourage behaviour change.	Green
5 Deliver the next phase of the Council's Transformational Change Programme that puts in place new ways of working to respond to current and future community needs and organisational challenges.	Green
6 Work with not for private-profit, voluntary and community organisations to deliver and shape local services and to encourage people to get more involved in their local communities.	Green
7 Deliver year three of the Council's Strategic Equality Plan, achieve Age Friendly status for the Vale and progress work as part of national action around race and sexual orientation and gender identity.	Green
8 Increase the use of the Welsh Language and enhance Welsh Language services through the delivery of the Council's new 5 year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy and a new Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).	Green
9 Work in partnership as part of the Armed Forces Covenant to achieve gold standard for our support for members of the armed forces, veterans, family members and widow or widowers.	Green

What we said we'd do	Performance Status
10 Implement the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and embedding new arrangements.	Green
11 Develop and deliver a comprehensive induction programme training and support for members following the 2022 local government elections.	Green
12 Implement a new HR strategy and Employee Development Programme with a particular focus on improving diversity across the workforce, planning for the future and staff well-being.	Green

What we've achieved

<p>1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhanced customer experience and access to services at C1V through a new digital platform – Granicus. - Our website has been enhanced to improve 'findability' of services. - Created new services to support our response to the Cost of Living Crisis. Responded to over 8,000 calls on our Cost of Living support line and over 10,000 applications for financial support. - 87% of customer enquiries to C1V were resolved at first contact and no Ombudsman complaints have been upheld against the Council. - Expanded SMART house provision to support independent living with new accommodation at Cary Close. Methyr Dyfan Road due for completion in Autumn 2023. - Introduced Digital medication in our residential care homes. - Expanded on-line services such as parking permits, waste and leisure services. - Introduced QR codes to planning site notices and neighbour consultation letters to improve access to the application on process.
<p>2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrated our approach to delivery of our Public Participation Strategy through our Public Participation Practitioner Network (PPPN), Member Champions network and the Equalities Consultative Forum. - Introduced a Participate Vale portal for e-petitions and engagement activities. Launched and promoted the Bang the Table platform to support public engagement activities. - Established a rolling programme of online engagement aligned to the annual performance calendar with engagement insight used alongside other data and performance insights to support the development of key Council plans.
<p>3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achieved Silver Youth Work Quality Mark, in recognition of high quality and impactful provision for young people. - Involved young people in recruitment e.g. Social Services Senior Strategic posts and Youth Offending Service Prevention Officers. - Young people helped shape and co-produce child friendly and accessible versions of council plans, survey such as the Well-being Plan, Annual Delivery Plan, Project Zero, School Attendance Campaign, Transgender toolkit, the budget and the Local Development Plan. - 317 hours in volunteering completed by members of the Vale Youth Council and Penarth Youth Action - Youth representation at Learning & Skills Committee appointed from Vale Youth Council.
<p>4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Successfully rolled out new waste arrangements in Penarth. - Planting 6,000 trees along the River Thaw via successful lottery bid from the Local Nature Partnership

- **Project Zero Engagement hub** now live on the Participate Vale platform to support engagement with communities and help shape our climate change response.
- Worked with key stakeholders ensuring that all development management decisions **secured biodiversity enhancement** in line with Planning Policy Wales.
- Successfully appointed a **programme manager for Project Zero** who is taking forward the Challenge Action Plan.
- Proactively working with schools on **Active Travel Surveys and Travel Plans**. E.g. Ysgol Sant Baruc, St David's and South Point Primary schools.

- 5.
- **3 beds reopened** at Ty Dyfan as part of a 1000 Bed Project to mitigate market capacity issues in social care.
 - **100 colleagues** across all directorates worked with SOCITM Advisory to inform our new **Digital Strategy**.
 - Successfully delivered **Wave 5 equipment** to support schools with remote learning provision.
 - **Established a shared service arrangement with Cardiff, Monmouthshire and Torfaen** to provide greater resilience and drive future procurement efficiencies.
 - Published our new **Corporate Asset Management strategy (2023-28)** which focuses on maximising use of our assets over the medium term in the most sustainable way.
 - **£500,000** in grant funding secured to support the delivery of the Food Pod
 - **Remodelled the Council's reserves** to match key priorities, such as Project Zero, and risks such as the cost of living crisis.
 - Successfully delivered a significant circa **£6m capital programme**.
 - Implemented **digital technology** to support our reshaping priorities including Oracle Fusion, MS365 tools, Granicus, and engagement platforms contributing to increased service access, reduced costs and increased transparency to citizens and other stakeholders.

- 6.
- Approved a **new Well-being Plan** for the Public Services Board, with particular emphasis on climate change, becoming Age Friendly and tackling poverty and deprivation

- 7.
- **11 additional homes secured** on a leasing agreement with the MOD to provide key resettlement support to Syrian and Afghan families living in the Vale.
 - New Age Friendly Officer has engaged with communities to develop an **Age Friendly PSB Charter**.
 - Recruited a Dementia Friendly Community Coordinator to progress the development of **Dementia Friendly Communities** in the Vale.
 - Worked with schools to use **'My Concern'** and **'Clarity'** to better understand and address bullying in our schools.
 - Improved accessibility for disabled residents, through provision of the **GreenLinks adapted transport service, 10 bus stop upgrades, installation of 31 electronic bus stop information displays** accessible for the visually impaired.
 - **5,765 passengers journeys** undertaken on the Greenlinks service for 2022-23, up on last year's figure of 3,345.
 - **230 users** of community transport services, up from 160 in 2021/22.
 - The Council achieved a Stonewall **Silver award** in recognition of progress in relation to its **LGBTQ+ inclusion agenda**.

- 8.
- **58 new enrolments up from 9 last year** in the 'Learn Welsh' programme by Council staff.

- 1 Welsh medium school has achieved the **Welsh Language Charter Gold Award**, 8 English medium primary schools have received the bronze **Cymraeg Campus Award**, 2 the silver award and 2 the gold award. 3 English medium secondary schools have received the Cymraeg Campus bronze award
- **Menter Bro Morgannwg** continues to offer varied opportunities for Welsh speakers and learners to enjoy social activities as well as pre-school and after-school activities for young people. **Over 15,150 participants** in events and activities over the course of the year.
- Further **increased capacity of Welsh medium education** with an **additional 210 primary places** at the new Barry waterfront development and an **additional 299 secondary places** at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg.
- **Enhanced provision via Urdd Gobaith Cymru** in response to identified need for more Welsh medium youth work provision.
- In conjunction with Cardiff Capital Region, developing a **Local Area Energy Plan** to engage with and support business decarbonisation.

9.

- Defence Employers Recognition Scheme **Gold Award** achieved by the Council in recognition of the positive work undertaken to support veterans and armed forces families.
- **1,500** people accessed the Veterans Advice Service and were signposted to help for Benefits, Social Care services, Finances, Employment and Housing.
- A new **LGBTQ+ veterans hub** was launched in October 2023.
- Implemented a **guaranteed interview scheme for veterans** and measures to **actively recruit new employees from the armed forces community**.
- The Council has been **shortlisted for a Welsh Veterans Award** by local veterans groups in recognition of our contribution and support.

10.

- Delivered our statutory duties required under Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 including publishing the Council's **Annual Self-Assessment** and a **Public Participation Strategy**.

11 .

- **All 54 Elected Members** including co-opted members successfully completed comprehensive training and development as part of the **Member Induction and Development Programme**.
- Supporting new and innovative approaches to scrutiny by delivering our **scrutiny action plan** in conjunction with elected members.
- Established a **programme of workshops aligned with the annual performance calendar** to enable effective member challenge and oversight in line with their roles.
- Established a **Members Champion network** to make effective connections between these councillors and the Council's work.

12.

- The **new People Strategy and key supporting strategies** reflect the new ways of working that will support the delivery of the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives.
- Positive increase in the Council's Diversity Ratio **from 2.9% in 2021/22 to 3.11%**, in line with our commitment to increase workforce diversity.
- **58** young people have benefitted to date from **enhanced relationships with local education establishments, Independent Apprenticeship providers and via the KickStart and Quick Start initiatives** to attract young talent into the Council.
- Increased our workforce aged under 25 **from 3.77% to 4.12%**.
- Increased the number of **Well-being Champions (from 45 to 65)**, further upskilled Occupational Health Teams to provide a wider range of services and activities for employees including a menopause café,

bespoke trauma informed training, community well-being sessions, and monthly woodland walk sessions

Engagement activities: what our residents and service users said

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
<p><u>Annual Delivery Plan</u></p>	<p>Agreement on the critical challenges facing the council and the proposed steps being taken to address these.</p> <p>Findings confirmed the relevance of our well-being objectives.</p> <p>Agreement and support for the proposed plan put forward by the Council.</p> <p>Over 320 people responded via online survey, social media and various workshops.</p>	<p>The Annual Delivery Plan has been adopted and actions are being monitored and progress reported to ensure delivery. Progress and outcomes are regularly communicated to key stakeholders via a variety of media.</p>
<p><u>Budget Consultation</u></p>	<p>Strong support for the Council to continue to review the way in which services are delivered to make them as efficient as possible.</p> <p>Agreement that the Council should prioritise funding for services that protect our most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>Increased charges for council tax and non-statutory services were less favourable options for balancing the budget.</p> <p>Resurfacing roads and investing in social services provision were identified as priorities amongst respondents.</p> <p>773 respondents to the budget survey.</p>	<p>In reality, the Council needed to use all of the proposed methods to balance the budget, including a proposed 4.9% council tax increase. Services that support and protect our most vulnerable residents have been prioritised, including investing in social services provision.</p> <p>In order to address the budget shortfall and the sustainability of valued services, other services are being delivered differently. Garden waste collections, which are non-statutory are now funded through an annual subscription paid for by residents who use the service. Black bag collections have moved to a three-weekly schedule in order to make savings.</p>
<p><u>Public Services Board (PSB) Well-being Plan 2023-28</u></p>	<p>Identified the following areas as those the PSB should focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for younger people and education • Access to services 	<p>The PSB has developed, published and launched its Well-being Plan 2023-28 addressing 3 well-being objectives – a more resilient and greener Vale, a more active and healthier Vale and a more equitable and connected Vale. The</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport and active travel, with particular focus on improving infrastructure • Needs of older people • Protecting the environment and tackling climate change • Crime and enforcement. <p>78.5% of residents agreed that the PSB should work towards a more resilient and greener Vale; 86.9% towards a more active and healthier Vale and 78.3% towards a more equitable and connected Vale. 1,264 responded to the survey.</p>	<p>engagement findings have informed the plan's activities.</p> <p>PSB partners have identified projects that will be the building blocks for taking these priorities forward with a particular focus on inequity and working in more deprived communities, sustainable transport and becoming age friendly.</p>
Active Travel Consultation	<p>Identified key barriers to active travel such as missing dropped kerbs and tactile paving, Kissing gates etc in relation to network maps in Barry, Cowbridge, Dinas Powys, Llantwit Major, Penarth, Rhoose, St Athan and Sully. Identified new routes and existing routes that need improvement.</p> <p>There were 560 respondents to the active travel development schemes. Across the Vale over the last three rounds, nearly 3650 engaged in active travel schemes development.</p>	<p>Made a start on removing discriminatory barriers on our Active Travel network and promoting access to all.</p> <p>Ongoing engagement has been key in ensuring the development of a more coherent Active Travel Network Map that is accessible to all.</p>
<p>Youth Participation Initiatives Programme of engagement with young people via client evaluations and other fora such as the Vale Rights Ambassadors, Youth Cabinet, Pupil Voice, Make Your Mark and key Council plans including Project Zero, the Annual Delivery Plan, PSB Well-being Plan, Active Travel Plans.</p>	<p>Engagement on youth participation highlighted the need for increased awareness of the National Participation Standards.</p> <p>Ongoing engagement on Council plans such as Project Zero, Active Travel, PSB Well-being Plan and Annual Delivery Plan show that young people are engaged in conversations around active travel climate change, nature emergency and the cost of living crisis with ongoing conversation on their impact.</p>	<p>Renewed focus on building in the voice of young people in all aspects of local authority business and strengthening the partnership between young people and the Local Authority in shaping our priorities and for services in the future.</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
	<p>Engagement on street safety campaign identified the need for improved street lighting, more CCTV and increased awareness of the reporting process of sexual harassment.</p> <p>Engagement on Mental Health and Well-being through discussions with Barnardo's School Based Counselling .</p>	<p>Strengthened young people's voice in identifying issues faced by young people in the Vale that includes feeling safe in their communities and possible solutions.</p> <p>Discussions have both informed and strengthened school based counselling provision for young people.</p>
Age Friendly Vale and 50+ Strategy Forum Consultation	<p>Confirmation of the key focus areas of the 50+ Strategy Forum which includes influencing strategy and policies, access to services, tackling loneliness and isolation, transport, environment, health, and advocacy for older people.</p> <p>Identified areas for further focus to help make the Vale more Age Friendly including more activities, public toilets, increased seating, access to services and access to information.</p> <p>243 people responded to the consultation.</p>	<p>Informed priorities in key Plans such as the PSB Well-being Plan and Council's Annual Delivery Plan.</p>

What our regulators said

Review	Findings	Our response
Springing Forward Workforce	<p>We are taking steps to improve workforce planning arrangements but need to strengthen the application of the sustainable development principle to further shape our approach to workforce planning.</p> <p>Two recommendations were made to ensure that our Workforce Plan is fully shaped by the sustainable development principle and to strengthen monitoring of the plan.</p>	<p>In line with enhancing our strategic Workforce Planning model, we engaged with the Local Government Association to deliver focused training and development in the skill of Strategic Workforce Planning which has allowed us to critically evaluate our processes.</p> <p>We are strengthening our arrangements to inform key council plans as aligned to the Council's Performance Framework and the Reshaping Programme.</p> <p>Developed Employee Data Dashboards to be used in directorate wide DMT meetings to</p>

Review	Findings	Our response
		allow managers to make informed decisions on aspects such as recruitment, performance appraisal and diversity.
Springing Forward Assets	<p>We have put arrangements in place that help manage our assets effectively but need to consider how we can more fully apply the sustainable development principle to strengthen these arrangements and plan for the future.</p> <p>One recommendation was made to ensure the strategic management of our assets fully apply the sustainable development principle.</p>	Reviewed, developed and published our new Corporate Asset Management strategy (2023-28) with a focus on maximising use of our assets over the medium term in the most sustainable way.
Sustainable Development Principle	<p>Our arrangements for ensuring service areas apply the sustainable development principle are largely effective, although there is scope to further develop some elements.</p> <p>Two recommendations were made to develop our project management toolkit and learning and development offer to help officers to understand and apply the sustainable development principle as needed in their roles.</p>	<p>We are reviewing our project management toolkit with the development of revised tools and guidance to support officers in application of the sustainable development principle.</p> <p>Introduced a programme of communications and information provision as part of the learning and development offer to further embed the sustainable development principle including, through the Annual Self-Assessment process, staff appraisal and promoting the Council's work on the Annual Delivery Plan.</p>

Our key challenges

- Significant challenges remain in some service areas in attracting and retaining staff. This has been exacerbated by budget pressures, national skills shortages and market forces. Nationally, local government remains the lowest paying part of the public sector and consequently lacks attractiveness as a career choice. We need to do significantly more to develop our employee brand, promote our employment offer and increase supply which will be challenging within a highly competitive employee market.
- Employee absence at 12.82 days per full time equivalent has worsened when compared with the same period last year (11.35), missing the target of 9.2 days. There is a need to address workload/ capacity issues and reduce the levels of presenteeism across the workforce, further exacerbated by the ongoing recruitment and retention challenges in some service areas.
- Whilst positive progress has been made, there is a need to accelerate progress in embedding a consistent approach to improve our response, reporting and learning from complaints and compliments.

- There is a need to resource and accelerate progress in developing customer insight, especially in relation to protected and socially disadvantaged groups to inform service design, development and delivery.
- Rising inflationary pressures beyond our control continue to impact on cost of supplies and the deliverability of capital programmes such as the Council Housing Building programme and the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme. This has seen costs rise by as much as 30% for individual projects and some contractors have been reluctant to commit to long term projects or to hold costs for long periods. Budgets and individual programmes are being reviewed as data emerges for each project, but this will continue to present challenges.
- Competing resources have impacted on the delivery of some key actions such as a new framework for the Council's relationship with the Third Sector, development of a new Carbon Management Plan 2023-2020 and key activities in our Strategic Equalities Plan and there is a need to progress these.

Areas for future focus

- Continue to work collaboratively internally and with key partners to address our recruitment and retention challenges.
- Progress work to increase workforce diversity including attracting and retaining a younger and more diverse workforce.
- Progress our proposals for employee culture, engagement and involvement for the future.
- Work collaboratively with education establishments, independent apprenticeship providers and other public sector organisations for the development of new skills and capability career pathways into local government to attract new talent which will help to develop the pipeline of skills we need to create a resilient workforce for the future.
- Develop and implement opportunities for improving absence management.
- Embed a consistent approach to improve our response, reporting and learning from complaints and compliments.
- Resource and accelerate progress in developing customer insight, especially in relation to protected and socially disadvantaged groups to inform service design, development and delivery.
- Progress work to expand online services and the range of digital methods used to engage and communicate with the Vale of Glamorgan citizens through the Digital Strategy.
- Progress work on the development of the Volunteering Strategy as part of the Well-being Strategy.
- Keep under review the Capital Programme to reflect and address emerging pressures/challenges around suitability/viability of our physical assets.
- Continue to work across the council and with partners to develop our collective capacity for citizen/customer engagement and our use of these insights alongside performance and other data insights to inform future service developments.
- Progress work to develop our new Carbon Management Plan 2023-2020.
- Progress key actions in our Strategic Equalities Plan including the LGBTQ+ inclusion programme and finalise and implement our Race Equality Action Plan.
- Strengthen our relationship and work with **Town and Community councils** and the Third Sector through delivery of the PSB's Well-being Plan and the agreement of a framework for our evolving relationship.

6.4 Our Annual Delivery Plan Performance by Well-being Objective

WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 2: To support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth

We are committed to supporting people of all ages develop and learn. We are committed to encouraging people's ambitions and to ensuring that individuals and communities are able to prosper and achieve their best.

Actions and Measures aligned to Well-being Objective 2		PERFORMANCE STATUS						Overall RAG Status for Well-being Objective 2
		Green		Amber		Red		
Actions	Measures	Actions	Measures	Actions	Measures	Actions	Measures	Actions and Measures
37	18	35(95%)	17 (94%)	0	0 (0%)	2(5%)	1 (6%)	GREEN

Overall performance (RAG) status for Well-being Objective 2 is **GOOD**. This judgement reflects the good progress made in relation to meeting our Annual Delivery Plan commitments for the period.

What we said we'd do

What we said we'd do	Performance Status
1 Work in partnership to prepare our schools for the new education curriculum.	Green
2 Meet the needs and respond to the social, emotional and mental health difficulties of children and young people.	Green
3 Provide training and support to schools to facilitate the phased implementation of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) reform.	Green
4 Work in partnership to support our schools to minimise exclusions and enhance attendance.	Green
5 Deliver improvements to our schools through the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme (21 st Century School Programme).	Green
6 Work with others to support employment and the development of skills for the future.	Green
7 Provide residents with advice, support and information on a range of issues including housing, debt, fuel poverty, benefits, employment, and training through a number of services.	Green
8 Work in partnership to develop regional and local strategies for transport, planning and economic development.	Green
9 Work with partners to support the ongoing recovery and economic growth of Barry.	Green
10 Develop and implement sustainable economic growth and recovery strategies that focus on our town centres.	Green
11 Reshape procurement practices and policies to ensure our procurement activities contribute to the national Well-being Goals,	Green

What we said we'd do	Performance Status
support work around climate change, community benefits and build on the foundational economy project.	

What we've achieved

<p>1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 50 individuals and organisations benefited from £396,000 of funding to develop and enhance sustainability of childcare provision in the Vale. - 159 (93%) of eligible childcare settings in the Vale are signed up to the Childcare Offer with 2,393 children having accessed the programme. - Family Information Service received over 1,600 queries in relation to childcare, up 3.5% from last year. - 655 practitioners from all Vale schools engaged in Curriculum for Wales related professional learning. - 1,811 practitioners from all Vale schools engaged in Central South Consortium professional learning events. - 100% (74) of newly qualified teachers in Vale schools engaged with the Aspire programme to enhance their knowledge. - At A level, over 20 subjects are in the top quartile of performance across England and Wales including Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Further Mathematics, Economics. - At Key Stage 4, 14 subjects are in the top quartile of performance across England and Wales including Biology, Chemistry, Economics, English Language and Literature, Mathematics.
<p>2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health checks completed on our schools provided positive feedback on progress to embedding a whole school approach to social, emotional and mental well-being. - 759 pupils engaged with Social Emotional and Mental Health services. - 4 Primary therapists delivered in-person and digital community based counselling support from two outreach centres. - 6 Primary schools are now supported by Luna Play with 4 receiving therapeutic play sessions and 3 receiving family play workshops.
<p>3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All schools attended ALNCo training. - Individual Development Plan (IDP) Champions and quality assurance processes established ensuring consistency in practice and contributing to learner progress. Over 300 IDPs quality assured in 2022-23. 619 School IDPS written, up from 335 in 2022. - 100% attendance from 28 education settings to ALN Code & Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal (Wales) Act in the Early Years training.
<p>4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivered a campaign with schools to improve attendance informed by children and young people. - Increase in Year 12s going on to sixth form, college or work based training with 0.23% NEET compared to 0.35% in 2021/22, ranked 2nd in Wales. - 2.56% of young people NEET upon leaving Year 13, slightly below last year's performance of 2.3%, ranking 8th in Wales.

- 5.
- Delivery of Band B Sustainable Communities for Learning projects has **remained on track** in terms of the overall programme which ends in 2026 with 70% of projects achieved. Completed **Ysgol Sant Baruc Welsh medium school**. Under construction are the Centre for Learning and Well-being in Barry; Cowbridge Primary and Ysgol Y Deri Special school in Penarth.
 - **158** new full-time jobs, **104** apprenticeships and **32** work experience placements; **3,000** hours of school STEM engagements, reaching over **11,000 pupils**; **99%** of construction waste avoiding landfill; **82%** construction spend within Wales; **50%** of the workforce coming from the local postcode are some of the community benefits of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.

- 6.
- **211%** against target of C4W+ clients engaged in support to improve their skills and their employability in comparison to last year's figure of 177%.
 - 11 active apprentices in roles across the Council as part of our Apprenticeship scheme.
 - **41** young people have benefitted from the Kick Start programme with 8 securing permanent roles in the Council.
 - **6** QuickStart placements completed in the Council as part of supporting the development of skills for the future with three securing full time employment.
 - **98%** Success rate on accredited courses for priority learners up from 91% in 2021/22, exceeding the national comparator.
 - Job Fayre event with over 300 individuals attending and over 50 stallholders showcasing options for young adults aged 16-24 including local employers, education and training, and mental well-being services.
 - **3** posts established to support neurodiverse individuals.
 - Estyn inspection of Adult and Community Learning identified **excellent partnership working** with Vale Communities for Work+ on provision of learning opportunities.

- 7.
- **239 tenancies** maintained six months after receiving Money Advice, against an annual target of 200.
 - 1,418 people accessed the **One Stop shop** for support on a wide range of housing related issues with interventions demonstrating positive outcomes for service users.

- 8.
- Secured **£600,000** funding to support Bus Stop upgrades including Cardiff Airport bus stop terminal.
 - **Barry Dock Transport interchange** has been completed.
 - **98.6%** of all planning applications have been determined within 8 weeks up from 94.4% in 2021/22.

- 9.
- **12 businesses** in Holton Road successfully secured Minor Physical Improvement grant funding as part of Barry town centre regeneration
 - Delivered **bus stop improvements** on Holton Road Barry Town Centre; High Street Barry; as well as a Park Crescent.
 - Developing a **Placemaking plan for our 4 main towns** including Barry, Llantwit Major, Penarth and Cowbridge focusing on economic growth.

- 10.
- Developed an **Investment strategy** for the Council with a focus on economic growth, regeneration and climate change.
 - **15 start-up businesses** across the Vale have been awarded grant funding through the Vale Business Start-up Bursary.

- **Infrastructure work completed in all Country parks** ready for fibre broadband roll out, increasing potential for income generation at these locations.
- Established a new **External Funding, Community Development and Innovation Team** to support placemaking, community and town centre regeneration.

11.

- Developed and adopted a **Procurement Strategy** which has introduced a requirement of social value in council contracts with emphasis on supporting the local economy, employment and climate action.
- Entered into a **shared service arrangement with Cardiff, Monmouthshire and Torfaen to provide greater resilience, and to drive future procurement efficiencies.**

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Engagement activities: what our residents and service users said

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
<p>The Knap Skate Park</p>	<p>Initial community ideas sought for design of the skate park with further engagement on the proposed design. In addition to specific design requests, the majority of respondents were supportive of the facility being one of quality that all could enjoy.</p>	<p>The final design was refined based on feedback from local community and additional funding raised to meet cost of these. The new skatepark is currently under construction and is due to be completed by the end of August.</p>
<p><u>Childcare Sufficiency Assessment</u> – Sought views of parents, carers, childcare providers, primary and secondary schools, children and young people, partner agencies and other professionals to shape and secure childcare services in response to local needs.</p>	<p>7 key areas were highlighted which formed the basis of an action plan to shape and secure childcare services in response to local needs.</p> <p>Response from 15 key partners.</p>	<p>Greater joined up working between internal and external stakeholders to address the similarities of support required to develop and sustain the childcare sector.</p> <p>The appointment of a Childcare Workforce Development Officer has provided the ability to lead on an important element to stabilise and increase the childcare workforce. The sector faces huge challenges and therefore working with partner agencies on shared thinking and the strategies that can equip childcare providers.</p>
<p>Communities for Work Plus (CfW+) Annual Jobs Fair, Youth Event, Employability Conference and CfW+ Engagement Plan</p>	<p>The Youth Event had very positive feedback on the range of range of employers, training and further education organisations showcasing opportunities for young adults at the event, which majority stated, suited their needs.</p> <p>The Employability Conference, identified the employment needs of local employers, partners, education providers and organisations providing employment-support.</p> <p>The Engagement Plan identified the need to increase engagement across the Vale and provide employability support from other outreach locations. Additionally, there was a need to increase activity across our social media</p>	<p>The Youth Event strengthened our engagement with 16-24 year olds as part of our commitment to the Welsh Government’s Young People’s Guarantee with new partner organisations looking to assist young adults into employment.</p> <p>Relationships have strengthened with organisations such as Careers Wales, Job Centre Plus and Prince’s Trust in light of us engaging more with young adults. The engagement has informed priority activities to meet our Delivery plan objectives.</p> <p>We have increased our social media presence to reach a wider audience targeting appropriate</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
	<p>platforms which has been a key priority.</p> <p>Over 50 stall holders attended to showcase their opportunities for young adults in the area, with over 300 individuals attending.</p>	<p>demographics to meet Welsh Government agendas.</p> <p>Increased focus on 50+ group ensured a focus on opportunities and support for this age group, working with our partners Job Centre Plus and Welsh Government.</p> <p>Regular engagement and interaction with our participants and partners has enabled us to keep abreast of current developments in the world of employability and the job market, enabling us to adjust our work to meet the needs of participants in a timely and relevant manner.</p> <p>At end of 2022/2023 our Facebook page was followed by just under 4k and our Facebook reach exceeded 20K, 10% higher than the previous quarter.</p>
<p>Restructure of the Youth Service and the Inclusion service</p>	<p>Limited resources in the inclusion Team to address the key issues of elective home education (EHE), exclusions and support for those pupils accessing out of school tuition. There were difficulties in staffing pupil disciplinary committees and ensuring EHE visits were being undertaken due to the capacity issues.</p> <p>Use of core finance was needed to implement the Youth service's new model of working in relation to pre-16 NEET prevention programme within schools and targeting those most at risk of being NEET Post-16 due to uncertainty of the Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) and delays in funding allocation.</p> <p>The need for Engagement with schools, Youth Engagement & progression Framework (YEPF)</p>	<p>Restructure of the Inclusion Team has addressed the issues of capacity in key areas and now 100% of Personal Development Curriculums have received LA officer support and all Elective Home Education families have been offered home visits and the offer of Welsh Government grant assistance. This was not the case previously.</p> <p>Greatly strengthened referrals for those most at risk with a new triage system, this identifies the support required; not only Pre-16 NEET or homelessness project staff, but partners also including Families First Youth Well-being mentors, Inclusion service, and LEO officers, all of which has enabled responsive and person-centred approaches in addressing young people's and family's needs.</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
	<p>Board and wider partners such as inclusion, youth well-being and play to continue to inform the service delivery model.</p> <p>Need for collaboration of Pre16 NEET and youth Homelessness to develop a single programme with single point of entry.</p> <p>Engaged with 10 staff on the restructure. All 159 elected home educated children were engaged about their requirements.</p>	<p>Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) confirmed in April 2023 will offset cost saving to core youth services, and fund Pre-16 NEETs work for the next 2 years. An additional £80k has also been secured from the fund to build additional capacity within this area and increase the impact that can be made.</p> <p>Post-16 NEET now sit under a new Communities for Work (C4W) model linked to SPF funding and the Youth Guarantee of which creates a single point of entry for all Post-16 NEET clients in the Vale.</p>
<p>Adult Community Learning - Learning and Employability Event, Barry Library (including, local organisations, Job Centre Plus, Communities for Work Plus, Careers Wales and local employers)</p>	<p>Feedback from attendees (over 300) identified the types of training and employment opportunities required, including demand levels.</p> <p>A separate event was undertaken for Welsh Speakers which also identified training needs.</p>	<p>Strengthened ACL partnership working with stakeholders and increased understanding about what other organisations are doing as well as offering useful information about courses available.</p> <p>Enabled ACL to gather key information about the types of courses that are in demand by learners and jobseekers and respond to these in future programmes. Personal information from jobseekers enabled ACL to contact them regarding specific courses that may be of interest to them. The data was also used to inform curriculum planning and delivery.</p> <p>Employment organisations provided insight into the courses current jobseekers need to progress and gain employment.</p> <p>The Welsh Speakers event met the criteria for the Cardiff & Vale Community Learning Partnership Teaching and Learning Group to hold an annual Welsh medium event, bringing together</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
		employers and a new cohort of partnership organisations for Welsh medium activities, with the data informing curriculum planning and delivery.
Partnership event with CAVC (Cardiff and Vale College) - Family Learning	Engaged with parents who have been attending Family learning programmes in Local Primary schools through taster sessions at Palmerston Centre to promote learning and other opportunities and identify their needs. This also identified potential barriers to re-engaging with education and learning, including childcare and financial difficulties and the need for further supporting information and signposting.	<p>Closer working with parents to provide positive learning experiences have helped them to re-engage with education and promote a stepping-stone progression route to future courses in Adult and Community Learning and Further Education.</p> <p>Variety of information to support Well-being, money advice and childcare now available.</p> <p>Reaching a different potential learning cohort to promote ACL courses and engaging with a wider audience to promote information about ACL in the Vale.</p> <p>Feedback information also informed curriculum planning for 2023/24 programmes.</p>
Breakfast briefings - Palmerston Centre, Vale Learning centre and at Penarth Job CentrePlus	Highlighted the need to keep abreast of local provision and learning opportunities to enable effective support and signposting.	<p>Improved communication and relationships with Jobcentre staff and managers, keeping them abreast of local provision and opportunities.</p> <p>Now offering Employability Courses at both Barry and Penarth Jobcentres including Employable Me Programme and Digital Skills as well as working with Jobcentres to develop the 50 plus agenda.</p>
Shared Prosperity Fund Engagement on circa £14m of funds allocated to the Vale of Glamorgan over the period 2022-25.	A series of 10 Community and Business Hackathons have been undertaken (with 20 registered attendees per session) to engage local communities to develop project ideas that will make the most of the funds in line with the Council's Well-being objectives.	<p>An Investment Plan was submitted in August 2022 as part of the Southeast Wales Region to unlock our funding allocation of circa £14m.</p> <p>The Plan reflects Vale specific issues. There continues to be ongoing consultation with internal</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
		and partners to help focus funding on those areas of most need. A selection and delivery board has been set up to make decisions on the projects being funded and to monitor delivery and the fund is now open for external applications.
Preparing for Levelling up Fund - Engagement Plan	Largely positive feedback on plans for a waterfront development of a new Marina and Water sports centre in Barry. Engagement also sought community views on longer term plans for Barry as the Placemaking Plan emerges.	The round 2 bid was unsuccessful and a round 3 bid is now in preparation informed by community views.

What our regulators said

Review / Findings/ Our response
No local regulatory reviews in 2022/23

Our key challenges

- The Wales Illegal Money Lending Unit continues to deal with a large volume of cases arising from the financial difficulties some found themselves in as a result of the pandemic and associated lockdowns, with work continuing to both investigate the illegal lenders and to support victims.
- The number of referrals to the Engagement Service, for external support to meet social, emotional and mental health needs in Primary schools has risen exponentially placing additional pressure on services and budgets.
- School attendance levels remain a concern overall. There is a declining three-year trend in attendance across both primary and secondary schools and there is a need to work with the Central South Consortium to enhance attendance in schools especially at secondary level where post-pandemic attendance is 5.5% below the 91% target.
- We are witnessing a rise in school exclusions. During 2018-19, (Pre-Covid) there were a total of 1,102 days lost due to exclusions, which has increased to 2,241 days in 2022-23. Whilst the rate of exclusions is low when compared with other local authorities, this remains an area of concern.

Areas for future focus

- Progress Placemaking Plans for the 4 main towns in the Vale of Glamorgan to support the economic and sustainable growth of our communities.
- Progress the Cogan transport interchange in line with our commitment to work towards developing an integrated, efficient, safe, accessible and sustainable public transport system.
- Ensure sufficiency of provision to address the increasing demand and complexity of children and young people's social, emotional, and mental well-being at primary and secondary levels by considering new service delivery models to balance the growth in demand for services.

- Review and enhance inclusive practice within schools to minimise exclusions.
- We have continued to build relationships with new and existing training providers to increase the Council's workforce/employment skills, however, further work is required to encourage managers to consider these apprenticeships as suitable recruitment options.
- Build on good relationships with local education establishments (such as Cardiff University & Cardiff and Vale College) as well as independent Apprenticeship providers and local employers to expand the Council's Apprenticeship scheme offer, with a particular focus on attracting 16-24 year olds into local government as a career choice.

DRAFT

6.5 Our Annual Delivery Plan Performance by Well-being Objective

WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 3: To support people at home and in their community

We will work in partnership to maximise people's physical and mental well-being to ensure they are safe at home and in the community and are able to make choices that support their overall well-being. We are committed to ensuring people have the necessary advice, care and support when they need it.

Actions and Measures aligned to Well-being Objective 3		PERFORMANCE STATUS						Overall RAG Status for Well-being Objective 3	
		Green		Amber		Red			
Actions	Measures	Actions	Measures	Actions	Measures	Actions	Measures	Actions	Measures
100	22	90(90%)	14(64%)	0	4(18%)	10(10%)	4 (18%)	GREEN	

Overall performance (RAG) status for Well-being Objective 3 is **GOOD**. This judgement reflects the good progress made in relation to meeting our Annual Delivery Plan commitments for the period.

What we said we'd do

What we said we'd do	Performance Status
1 Work in partnership regionally and nationally to continue to respond to and recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.	Green
2 Develop and promote the range of events, leisure, recreational and educational activities available across our venues and outdoor spaces.	Amber
3 Work in partnership to facilitate and promote inclusive opportunities for leisure, play and sports development.	Green
4 Work in partnership to address food poverty and to implement the Move More, Eat Well Plan.	Green
5 Develop a new Community Investment Strategy to improve quality of life for tenants on Council housing estates.	Green
6 Improve public transport infrastructure and services through support for socially necessary bus services and upgrades to the transport infrastructure.	Green
7 Implement new ways of working for Social Services that effectively support our residents in the context of the challenges created by the pandemic and for their future needs.	Green
8 Work with community leaders & partners in Llantwit Major as a pilot to review and transform the range of support available to older people within their community.	Green
9 Respond to the workforce challenges in the social care sector for appropriately skilled and experienced people	Green
10 Strengthen existing partnership arrangements with the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and establish the Vale Alliance to develop and implement more integrated models of care.	Green

What we said we'd do	Performance Status
11 Refocus the way domiciliary care is provided to enhance the individual's voice and control over their care arrangements through the expansion of 'Your Choice'.	Green
12 Provide a range of services, support and information to support mental health and well-being for all ages.	Green
13 Work co-productively with children and their families through a strengths-based model to improve outcomes and enhance well-being.	Green
14 Deliver the priorities of the Regional Safeguarding Board to protect children and adults at risk of neglect, abuse and exploitation	Green
15 Deliver the Shared Regulatory Services Business Plan for 2022/23 to improve health and well-being, safeguard the vulnerable, protect the environment, support the local economy and maximise the use of resources.	Green
16 Work with partners to deliver the Safer Vale Action Plan and develop a new Safer Vale Strategy for 2023-2026.	Green
17 Implement the Regional Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy.	Green
18 Work with partners to implement the Youth Offending Service Recovery Plan to enhance young people's outcomes.	Green
19 Maximise Council house building and acquisition opportunities and progress the development of over 100 new Council Homes across the Vale.	Red
20 Implement a five-year Local Housing strategy to address housing need, reduce homelessness and to increase the supply of good quality, accessible and affordable housing.	Green
21 Work with partners to reduce homelessness and implement a Housing Support Programme Strategy.	Green

What we've achieved

<p>1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Worked with the Health Board and partner agencies to support care homes and other high-risk settings in respect of Covid-19 infections. - Participated in the regional Warning and Informing group of the South Wales Local Resilience Forum to prepare for winter pressures, Covid-19 booster campaigns, and arrangements for flooding/ adverse weather. - Developed a Non-Treasury Investment Strategy with an initial £12M earmarked for investments. - Worked with Passenger Transport operators and the City Region to increase bus service provision post pandemic including user events to promote uptake. - Agreed a 10 year contract extension with Legacy Leisure to manage leisure facilities providing certainty in leisure provision for the future.
<p>2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Successfully secured Shared Prosperity funding to support the Vale's 4 main towns to increase footfall. - 30+ events delivered in collaboration with public, private and voluntary organisations, supporting the Vale economy and raising the profile of the Vale as an events destination. - Makerspace facilities in Penarth and Barry Library are up and running with high uptake of events and courses by residents, community groups and local businesses.
<p>3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduced play cubes in 7 venues across the Vale to increase access to free community play. - 116 community play sessions held across the year, with 2,677 participations. - 21 Vale schools participating in Play Friendly Schools initiative to increase play opportunities.

- Over **100 children from highest free school meal schools** participated in the Gareth Bale Festival of Sport.
- **130 partners** involved in delivering **147 activities** in **946 sessions** in **23 areas** of the Vale. Over **19,500 participations** with **99% satisfaction** with activities. **433** children with disabilities and **477** children with additional learning needs participated.
- **90%** of clients' health improved on completion of the exercise programme, up from 30% in 2021/22.
- The **Playmakers project** has seen **265 children** from 16 primary schools receive training to develop their skills to deliver physical activity opportunities to their peers.

4.

- **90% of infant pupils** have taken a Primary Free School Meal since its launch in September 2022, the highest uptake of all Welsh local authorities, **saving parents £475 per child**.
- **£100,000 funding** has been awarded across the Vale to several food insecurity support services.
- Food Vale awarded the '**Bronze Sustainable Food Places Award**' and successfully led with partners, bids for a number of grants that will support sustainable food action in the Vale.
- Expanded the **Golden Pass project** to the Eastern Vale, Western Vale and Barry supporting older people to engage in activities such as walking netball, walking football and chair fit.
- Piloted the **Active Playgrounds Project** with 7 schools receiving playground markings which saw a **58% increase** in steps amongst sample group observed.
- **10 organisations** successfully completed the **Cardiff and Vale Healthy Travel Charter**.
- Tailored nutrition, practical cookery and physical activity projects delivered through the '**Hapi Cymru Project**' including sessions delivered in partnership with Pencoedtre High School, Jenner Park Primary School, Age Connects at CF61 Community Centre and Atal Y Fro.
- **10 organisations** successfully completed the **Cardiff and Vale Healthy Travel Charter**.
- **£11,671** funding allocated to community organisations to provide warm refreshments, and contributions to additional utility bills.
- **26 warm spaces** were funded across the Vale to support Vale residents.
- **Launched Cost of Living webpages** which signpost citizens to information on help and support available to residents through Council services, and wider organisations.

5.

- **75** accounts registered with nearly **20 partners** offering rewards to as part of the Value in the Vale scheme benefitting local volunteers and businesses. **100%** volunteers satisfied with their placements, **100%** feel it as **improved their employment prospects**, **100% feel more connected to their communities** and **100% would recommend Value in the Vale** to others, and **99% have seen an improvement in their well-being**.
- Established a **Tenants Service Quality Accessor Group** who act as Critical Friends and advise Vale Homes on what is working well, what is not and make recommendations on changes needed. As well as mystery shopping, the group have reviewed the Vale Homes Contract Holders Handbook and Vale Homes welcome packs.
- Helped people to develop gardening skills, reduce unemployment and disengagement and increase physical activity and well-being through the '**Everyone's Garden**' community project which transformed a derelict site into use.
- Supported the return of **Bike Club** which has given local children the opportunity to learn and develop confident bike riding skills. Around **600** participated every Tuesday, over the year.

6.

- **10 bus stops** upgraded and **31 electronic bus stop information displays** were installed.

- Awarded **£400k** of supported bus service contracts in conjunction with £380,490 Welsh Government Bus Services Support Grant.

7.

- Launched the **Cardiff & Vale Unpaid Carers Charter** and created a **new service** to support unpaid carers.
- **1,200** carers benefitted from the **unpaid carers fund**
- Established an **-integrated 24/7 Falls service** to provide rapid response to people who have fallen and access to specialist interventions. Responded to **over 500** falls in one month, saving an estimated £547,026.
- **300** new Telecare customers, up 20% from 2021/22.
- **100% of people who received a Disabled Facilities Grant** feel the assistance has made them **safer and more independent** in their own home, up from 96.5% in 2021/22.
- **297 days on average** to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant up on 334 days in 2021/22.
- **925 citizens** received care in their homes with an average of **15.66 weekly hours of care** being delivered.
- Supported **Learning Disabilities and Autism local community initiatives** including cinema nights, 'Keep Smiling' sessions with Public Health Wales, and relationships and sexual health awareness sessions.
- Two **SMART houses** operational, a third under construction and a **further 6** planned for 2024/25, further supporting independent living and enhancing citizen well-being.

8.

- Worked with Glamorgan Voluntary Services and Age Connects to expand services based at Illtud House, Llantwit Major to help people connect seamlessly with their community, support services and social activities.
- Nearly **24 organisations** provide a service to the community at any given time including support for adults with learning difficulties, Llantwit Dementia Friends, Age Connects dance and exercise classes for the elderly, Motion Control lead dementia-friendly activities, a Well-being café, events for young people with mental health difficulties and many more.

9.

- **14 new Social Care Officers** recruited to increase service resilience.
- Promoted the **'Grow our own' Social Workers initiative** with **9** staff studying for the Certificate of Higher Education in Social Care Practice (Wales).
- **Sponsored 6 members of staff** to complete Level 2 of the Social Work degree.
- Provided **an additional 20 placements to Student Social Workers** for our partner universities.
- Increased **our Fast Track to Care Training Programme** to once a month to help meet demand for social care workers. 41 people enrolled on 5 programmes in 2022/23 with **39 completing**.

10.

- Agreed a governance structure, successfully recruited a Vale Locality Manager and are progressing our 3 priorities – the Well-being Matters Service, Vale Community Resource Service and Third Sector Contracts, as part of the **Vale Alliance**.
- Health and Well-being services in the Vale via Dewis Cymru received **253,194 views**, up by **26.6%** from 2021/22.
- Developed working protocols to ensure seamless delivery of health, social care and well-being responses to people accessing the **Well-being Matters Service**.

11.

- **11 providers** delivering care under the 'Your Choice' scheme.
- **235 residents currently receiving their care** and support provided as a **YC package** (around 3,700 hours per week).
- **Established Reflective Strength Based groups** to support integration of preventative services, admission avoidance and resilient communities.

12.

- Increased our Well-being offer in libraries with **934 events** attracting **15,459 participants**.
- **Nearly 1,900 free teas and coffees** funded by Warm Spaces.
- Collaborated with the **Welsh College of Music and Drama** on a new all age programme at Penarth Pavilion and uptake has been excellent. Positive feedback from parents on the impact it's had on children's well-being.

13.

- **Established a 'Developing Services Together' group** to involve the families we support in service development, modelling the 'Building on Strengths' values.
- **74%** of assessments for children completed within timescales, up from 54% last year.
- **8.3%** of children in care had to move 3 or more times during the year, improvement on 10% last year.
- Approved **19 kinship carers** providing family alternatives for children looked after, reducing additional demands for mainstream provision.

14.

- **100%** of all corporate appointments complied with the safer recruitment policy.
- Collaborated on the development of the new draft **Cardiff and Vale Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence strategy**.

15.

- SRS 'Ask the Regulator' podcast was nominated at the **National Community Radio Awards**.
- **54,560 illegal cigarettes** were seized in Cardiff with a retail value of £31,266 and 8.75 kg of hand rolling tobacco with a retail value of £4,748.
- **2 underage operations** were conducted in relation to the sale of disposable e-cigarettes, **35 premises** were given written warnings and advice.
- Delivered **scam awareness** campaign across the Vale.
- **Stop Loan Sharks Wales** delivered training to 46 organisations from all over Wales with nearly **900 participants**, representing a 36% increase on 2021/22 and **launched a new website**.
- Increased the Primary Authority portfolio from **28 to 34 partnerships** enabling full cost recovery for work undertaken.
- **100%** (65) high risk food premises inspected.
- **90.1%** (20) significant breaches rectified by Trading Standards intervention.
- **93%** of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days

16.

- **488 messages** were sent out by the Community Safety Team through different online platforms, including safety advice for Mental Health, Knowing where your Children are during Half Terms, Anti-Social Behaviour, Domestic Abuse & Fly tipping.
- **84 cameras and 10 re-deployable cameras** installed throughout the Vale as part of CCTV upgrades to enhance community safety.

17.

- **100% of domestic abuse victims** reported feeling safer as a result of security improvements to victim's homes delivered by the Safer Vale Partnership.
- **18 schools** have signed up for Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence training with **738 staff** completing the training.
- **963 adults and 107 children and young people** affected by domestic abuse supported by Atal Y Fro, via specialist professional (386) tenancy relating support (165), refuge accommodation (48), counselling and therapeutic group work (143) with **92% customer satisfaction**.
- **2,317** Council staff trained at Level 1 and **948** at level 2 on safeguarding/ domestic abuse to better identify and refer individuals who come into contact with victims of domestic abuse.

18.

- **'Good' inspection rating** achieved by the Youth Offending Service.
- **Increased the diversionary support** for young people identified by the Police through recruitment of an additional practitioner.
- **94%** of all support has been through preventative work, with an **increase of 32% of children receiving this support** contributing to positive outcomes.
- Significant **reduction in First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System** by **36%** with a **37% reduction in reoffending**.

19.

- **138 new Council Homes** at 5 sites across the Vale of Glamorgan are under construction with completion by March 2024.

20.

- Approved a **new 5-year Local Housing Strategy**.
- **72%** of **additional affordable housing units granted planning permission** during the year as a percentage of all additional housing units granted planning permission, up from 58.56% in 2021/22.

21.

- **72% (291)** of the dwellings approved through the planning system during the year were designated as affordable housing.
- **A further 56 affordable dwellings** at the Former Barry Railway Sidings approved by the Planning Committee.
- Percentage of all households where **a positive prevention action succeeded in preventing/relieving homelessness** rose to **47% in 2022/23** from 40.9% in 2021/22.

Engagement activities: what our residents and service users said

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
<p>Public Transport and Road Safety Satisfaction Survey</p>	<p>Survey results show how the Covid pandemic and the UK's departure from the EU have both had a negative impact on the industry and service delivery. Also, there has been the impact of reduced budgets on public satisfaction transport services, highways maintenance and cleansing.</p> <p>For example, availability of experienced qualified PCV drivers due to either falling ill with Covid or transferring their skills to the more lucrative HGV industry and less availability of qualified drivers from the EU.</p> <p>Identified users' preferences for bus stop and shelter upgrades across the Vale, which will assist with targeting funds made available for this purpose.</p> <p>There were 55 respondents to the survey. Satisfaction scores out of 5 with regard to the following aspects were:</p> <p>Public transport information = 2.3 Bus services = 2.11 Rail services = 2.48 Community transport services = 2.18 Taxis = 2.72 Electronic bus stop information = 2.17 Bus fares = 2.52 Bus stops and shelters upgraded since 2020 = 2.77 Cleanliness of bus stop shelters = 2.44 Maintenance of bus stop shelters = 2.44 Road safety measures = 2.28 Condition of pavements = 1.8 Condition of roads = 1.59</p>	<p>Users' preferences for bus stop and shelter upgrades have been collated to identify the areas and specific stops mentioned, which will enable informed, as and when funding for this is made available.</p> <p>An innovative and resourceful approach continues to be taken to service development despite reducing budgets and these will continue to be informed by our engagement findings.</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
<p>Families First Engagement</p>	<p>The majority of users (95%) were happy with services they had accessed and stated that these have had a positive impact on their lives.</p> <p>A well-being networking event with 44 partners and over 256 professionals highlighted the value of networking between schools, professionals and other organisations to gain much needed information on different services available for Children and Young people in the Vale of Glamorgan and how to access these.</p> <p>Reviewing Adverse Childhood Experiences data identified low levels of ethnic minority groups accessing Families First services.</p>	<p>Strengthened how the partnership collectively uses data insights from parent participants, community partners, children and young people and our various support projects to enhance service design and better target provision. Regularly involving a wide range of partners and local agencies in reviewing how we work alongside service data insights has contributed to a more consistent approach to provision and reduced duplication.</p> <p>The Families First webpages have been reviewed and updated.</p> <p>Each project is exploring how they can increase more diverse ethnic backgrounds.</p> <p>Referral data from the Families First Advice Line has enabled the Families First Management Board to target the development of services. This has seen the creation of a Children’s Mentoring Service.</p>
<p>Developing a more sustainable and inclusive service to meet the objectives of the Council’s Arts Strategy and future uses of Art Central Gallery</p>	<p>The majority (92%) of responses to the consultation are in support of keeping Arts Central Gallery as an arts venue in Barry and to generate new sources of revenue to support the provision and allow it to develop. Over 300 respondents to the consultation.</p>	<p>Increased opportunities to participate in the arts and to develop skills and creativity through; new Makerspace areas at Penarth and Barry libraries; increased digital exhibitions following success during the pandemic; introduced an annual arts census to identify needs of arts organisations, establish common support and funding requirements and to support development of the Council’s Arts Strategy; introduced a comprehensive programme of commercial and community arts events at Penarth Pavilion including a cinema.</p>
<p>Penarth Pier Pavilion</p>	<p>The majority of respondents to the consultation stated that they</p>	<p>Penarth Pier Pavilion is now a thriving events venue catering for</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
	<p>would like to see the Pavilion include a cinema space with an accompanying café, bar or street food space that could be used throughout the day and evening time, something akin to Cardiff's Chapter Arts Centre.</p> <p>A large proportion of respondents would like to see the space used for live music, theatre and comedy performances.</p> <p>Many respondents would still like to see the space used for classes and group sessions for older and young people.</p> <p>Finally, the use of the Pavilion for business and events was less well supported with many reflecting on the importance of it being an open community facility.</p> <p>More than 1,000 people responded to the consultation.</p>	<p>both community and commercial activities.</p> <p>A portion of turnover from the Pier Café (Big Fresh Company) are given back to the Pavilion to support its operation and to provide resilience to the service against potential future cost pressures. The company's profits are reinvested into Vale of Glamorgan schools and local community groups.</p> <p>The operation of the Penarth Pier Pavilion has provided a significant contribution towards the Council's Arts and Culture Strategy, facilitating a number of community, well-being, arts and culture events since being brought back into operation under the Council.</p> <p>Improved public realm with the refurbishment of infrastructure along Penarth Esplanade, the Pavilion and along Penarth seafront.</p>
<p>'Summer of Fun' and 'Winter of Well-being' programs to support the well-being of children and young people</p>	<p>Schools and partners identified a variety of activities that covered the main objectives of the Summer and winter of fun well-being programmes i.e. supporting fun and the opportunity for children and young people to express themselves through play; community based interactive, creative and play-based initiatives for all ages and; opportunities to play with friends and peers.</p> <p>88 people completed the online Summer of Fun survey created for participation. Furthermore, each delivery organisation completed an end of project report which included feedback from the</p>	<p>Engagement findings informed a comprehensive programme of leisure, sporting, learning and arts activities and events which were free and undertaken throughout the summer and winter to support children and young people's well-being.</p> <p>Increased opportunities (over 30 events) for families to participate for free in well-being activities delivered in collaboration with URDD, Legacy Leisure, YMCA and the Libraries Service. Supporting the social, emotional and physical health and well-being through these opportunities will help improve social skills, rebuild</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
	organisation staff, participants, parents etc.	confidence and in re-engaging with learning and education.
Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP)	Engagement sessions were held with stakeholders including elected members, town and community councils and the Public Services Board on the Issues, Vision, and Objectives for the Plan and Growth and Spatial Options. In addition, a public consultation on the Scoping Report for the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal has been undertaken. Key issues identified throughout the engagement have informed the plan process.	Key issues have and continue to be addressed through the engagement process and as and when required, changes are incorporated into the plan process.
Vale Community Resource Service (VCRS)	The majority of respondents (150) felt that: useful information and advice was available at the start of the service and when it was required; that care workers and the service were reliable and were very respectful to them; the service and the support it provided made a positive difference to well-being; felt safer both physically and emotionally as a result of the service; felt involved in the planning of the service and able to make changes if required; sometimes experienced delays or changes in call times, but were advised in good time, and also delays were fully explained.	The findings from the engagement exercise were used to inform changes made to processes and procedures, such as more varied information provision and leaflet design; enhance collaborative working with Health Teams such as the District Nurses and Primary Care (GPs), particularly in relation to medication support and regular auditing and reviews undertaken in collaboration with the Quality Officer and Compliance Manager.
Adult Placement Service ‘Shared Lives’	In relation to shared lives, individuals: felt happy with information they received and preferred speaking to people about the new service; felt involved in writing their “about me” plan and felt it reflected what matters to them; feel safe where they live and enjoy the activities they do which helps them to feel part of the family they live with. Hosts are satisfied with the information they received to become a host and feel positive about the introductions process.	Information for individuals and hosts continues to be a focus and alternative methods continue to be explored. Currently developing a film showcasing the work of the host and the benefits of the support they offer to individuals. involvement in care planning is a key focus and the 'About Me' plan is reviewed and updated regularly. The service has recently reviewed and developed its training programme and will continue to monitor this.

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
	<p>Most feel informed of any service developments/changes and that documents reflect discussions held with all parties; they felt mostly supported and involved in visits, reviews and issues relating to care and were mostly satisfied with training that prepares them to become a host. Hosts are satisfied with support from the service if placement issues arise and are very pleased with the support from their project workers and feel they can approach them in relation to issues they face.</p> <p>17 citizens and 6 hosts participated in the consultation.</p>	
<p>Vale Alcohol and Drug Team (VADT)</p>	<p>In relation to Vale Alcohol and Drug Team: key workers were in frequent contact and stayed consistent, so individuals were able to build trust; respondents felt the service had had a positive impact on their well-being, some feel they owe their life to the service; individuals feel they are a priority for the service and not judged; individuals felt that they receive information and advice at times helpful to them, regardless of time of day.</p> <p>12 service users participated in the consultation.</p>	<p>We continue to build upon the existing communication mechanisms to facilitate engagement and feedback at the end of the service.</p> <p>There is a focus on ensuring that the service continues to be easily accessible as many do not know about the support from the VADT.</p>
<p>Day Services</p>	<p>Individuals: were mostly happy with communication with staff and highlighted the importance of social interaction with others; felt safe and supported and had developed more social confidence; feel able to stay independent but are particularly satisfied with the time staff are able to spend with them helping with activities and supporting with some tasks; were satisfied with activities and would like to be able to attend on a weekend.</p>	<p>There is further focus on improving activities available to individuals especially those that help support mental health and well-being.</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
	<p>Most families: feel happy with advice, care and support and communication; felt that although resources are scarce, individuals feel safe and part of a group; feel the service is effective especially in relation to activities and increasing self-confidence to do more activities tailored to the individuals' needs. 5 service users and their families participated in the engagement exercise.</p>	
<p>Carers Service</p>	<p>37 service users responded to the consultation. Most carers received enough information about support for unpaid carers but not all were aware of their right to an assessment of need for a carer. Most had received an unpaid carers' assessment, and many were satisfied with the assessment process. Most were satisfied with any support or services they have received because of their needs assessment.</p>	<p>Communication will remain a focus so that unpaid carers remain aware of any developments and of the Carer's Gateway.</p> <p>Continued focus on ensuring information is available about assessment and support for unpaid carers.</p> <p>Continued focus on ensuring carers feel they are listened to and understood.</p> <p>Continued focus on maintaining strong links with other services to enable effective partnership working to support unpaid carers.</p>
<p>Vale Locality Mental Health Community Support Service (VLMHCS)</p>	<p>27 Vale Locality Mental Health Community Support users: felt welcome when they first attended and were reassured, they could be supported to reintegrate with the community and also feel they belong in a group; felt that they were provided with enough information about how the service can help; most feel that they have received the support they needed from the service; have noticed significant improvements in their well-being since accessing support; the social groups have helped individuals to develop confidence to interact in smaller groups and to spend time with others in an informal setting.</p>	<p>Improving supported housing overseen by the Community Support Workers.</p> <p>Focus on providing as much information as individuals need at a time appropriate for them, to ensure they are not overwhelmed.</p> <p>The support of an occupational therapist will be enlisted to provide further support for everyday tasks.</p> <p>Looking into setting up a buddy system for when new people join the group so members who have experienced the support can</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
		<p>provide initial information on an informal basis.</p> <p>Continue to maintain transparency about what the service can and can't provide support with so that expectations are managed.</p>
Placements Team	<p>19 Foster carers: felt positive about the annual review process; most feel they have been supported through changes in the service.</p> <p>Foster carers feel satisfied with the communication and support their supervising social worker has provided, and from the fostering service overall. The informal groups were considered a valuable resource to raise any concerns or suggest improvements.</p>	<p>Focus on ensuring that the methods of communication with foster carers are effective and that formal and informal groups continue to be supported.</p> <p>Maintain good levels of ongoing support for new foster carers and direct them to sources of support.</p> <p>Focus on ensuring learning and development plans for foster carers plan meets their individual needs.</p> <p>Emphasis on supporting foster carers to reflect on their learning.</p>
Vale, Valleys and Cardiff Adoption Service	<p>Adopters were pleased with information given with the initial response from the service; most had engaged with other services offered to them by Therapeutic Education and Support Services in Adoption e.g., webinars, well-being activities, and are interested in further similar services; most felt support offered stability for their families; Respondents had been easily able to contact professionals when required; adopters were satisfied with the content of the Adoption Support Plan and the explanation of the processes associated with the adoption panel; some issues raised in relation to timescales for the matching process; some adopters were unaware of how to access post placement support. 17 service users participated in the consultation.</p>	<p>Improved consistency of communication between social workers and adopters.</p> <p>Focus on quality and comprehensive information provision about the child prior to the matching process.</p> <p>Continue to ensure requests for support and information are addressed in a timely way and adopters are being involved in decision making.</p> <p>Continue to offer support and advice proactively including signposting to appropriate support services.</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
<p>Flying Start</p>	<p>The service has been understanding towards families' needs and this is appreciated by parents; nursery was initially very good at updating the social media page and this needs to be maintained along with other forms of updates; families felt advice met most people's expectations and Flying Start involvement had positive impact on their family relationships and emotional well-being; "Learning Journey Booklets" are being provided which covers many of the areas and parents can take home to keep. 36 service users/ families participated in the consultation.</p>	<p>Continue to focus on maintaining good standards of communication with families and providing relevant and concise information.</p> <p>Providing more information for parents about general day time routines and general well-being.</p> <p>Providing more detail about parents about their child's social interaction for example whether they were playing more on their own or with a group of other children.</p> <p>The service has signed up to a new information sharing app so parents will be able to access this and obtain information as and when they would like to.</p>
<p>Child Health and Disability and Leaving Care</p>	<p>4 young people and their families participated in the consultation. Most parents were able to obtain information about how the team could support them and were able to speak to their child's social worker when they have needed to; they felt they were treated with respect and felt they could access the support they needed; the support received has helped parents and their children to feel safe.</p> <p>Young people were supported to feel safe and were able to participate in activities they enjoyed at school; they were happy with the help they had and were able to ask their social worker or key worker if they had any questions about the help they have both at school and at home.</p> <p>Parents felt involved with the development of care and support plans for their children.</p>	<p>Enhanced provision of information for available support and services where appropriate.</p> <p>Focus on ensuring families remain involved and participate in planning for their child's care and support.</p> <p>Ensuring that families receive enough information/support regarding the process of transition.</p> <p>Focus on ensuring that children and young people are listened to by their social worker in relation to what help they feel they need.</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
<p>14 Plus Team</p>	<p>Care leavers were able to contact their young person's advisor easily, and if they were not available, they know that they would come back to them as soon as they could; Care leavers feel their young person's advisor has been able to help them with their questions and concerns and treated them with courtesy and respect.</p> <p>Young people said that the service had helped them to feel safe; most feel the service had helped to prepare them for adulthood but did feel that they would need further lighter touch support after this stage; most care leavers felt involved with their future care planning and all felt they had been listened to. 6, 14-Plus service users participated in the consultation.</p>	<p>Continue to focus on exploring opportunities for wider engagement via social media e.g. WhatsApp and Instagram.</p> <p>Strengthened focus on involving young people in engagement and consultation opportunities to ensure they have a strong voice in service development.</p> <p>Increased focus on tailoring support to individual needs e.g., housing advice, well-being, independent living etc.</p> <p>The service aims to continue to focus on consistency and quality of contacts made by Social Workers and Young Person Advisors (for those over 18)</p>
<p>Residential Care Services</p>	<p>Relatives were pleased with the care and support provided for residents across the homes, and families were happy with the choices and opportunities for residents but did provide suggestions for enhancing activities and tailoring them to the residents' interests.</p> <p>Relatives feel residents' needs have been catered for appropriately by the service and generally very happy with the support provided. They felt reassured that the residents were being kept safe.</p> <p>Residents felt safe and very strongly supported, and most were able to take part in activities of interest. Staff were liked and appreciated. Residents appreciated the variety and quality of food provided and their well-being had improved considerably</p>	<p>Focus on building further resilience by enhancing the support available to residential care staff teams such as supervision, training opportunities within their working time, and encourage participation in the corporate well-being sessions.</p> <p>Continue to focus on working with staff to enhance capacity to give staff more quality time with residents.</p> <p>Continue to offer a range of activities to residents to enhance their well-being.</p> <p>Ensuring residents, relatives, and staff continue to have opportunities to provide their views about the service.</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
	<p>since living in the home as they felt safe and supported while maintaining some independence. Most felt the introduction service was helpful for all involved. Staff felt valued by residents and relatives, but staffing shortages impacted on the time they could spend with residents.</p> <p>25 residents, 15 relatives, and 18 staff took part in the consultation.</p>	
Warm Spaces/Friday Fun – (Palmerston Centre)	<p>Feedback from the Friday Fun Drop-in Taster activities identified demand levels and the need to cater for a different cohort in terms of learning opportunities.</p>	<p>Increased reach and uptake of learning opportunities from a wider groups of learners.</p> <p>Feedback information used to inform curriculum planning for 2023/24 programmes.</p>
HouseMark STAR Survey - Vale Tenants	<p>925 tenants responded to the survey.</p> <p>Key findings were: 76% of tenants are satisfied with the overall services provided, with 32% very satisfied; 75% of tenants agree that the Council have friendly and approachable staff, whilst 71% also agree that they provided the service they expect from their landlord; 69% felt the Council provided an efficient and effective service; 57% felt their needs were understood; 54% said the Council kept its promises.</p> <p>Top three priorities related to Repairs and maintenance; overall quality of tenants homes and listening to tenants and keeping them informed.</p>	<p>Identified areas for improvement is informing service developments going forward.</p>

What our regulators said

Review	Findings	Our response
Performance Evaluation Inspection of Vale of Glamorgan Social Services	<p>There is strong senior leadership within social services; there are clear strategic plans in place to monitor and evaluate improvements across services via</p>	<p>Further collaboration being undertaken to address the areas for improvement which are reflected in actions within the Social Services Reshaping Board's</p>

Review	Findings	Our response
	<p>the ‘Social Services Reshaping Board’; plans are in place to strengthen the quality of supervision within Children & Young People’s Services through ‘Building on Strengths’(BoS) model but further work is required before full implementation is achieved; most people who receive support and services from the Council do so in a timely manner, are supported to maintain their safety and well-being and their voices are heard; there is evidence of the active offer of Welsh language and people’s language preference was seen in key documents; the work of the ‘Reshaping Board’ is addressing the need to further develop a robust quality assurance system.</p> <p>18 areas for improvement have been identified for social services under themes of People-Voice and Control, Prevention, Well-being and Partnerships.</p>	<p>tracker and progress on these are reported monthly.</p>
<p>HMIP Inspection Youth Offending Service</p>	<p>Overall rating of ‘Good’ attributed to Youth Offending Services in the Vale of Glamorgan with ratings in cores standards as below:</p> <p>Organisational delivery: Governance & leadership – Required Improvement Staff - Good Partnerships and services – Good Information and facilities – Good Court disposals: Assessment - Good Planning - Good Implementation and delivery - Outstanding Reviewing – Good</p> <p>Out of court disposals: Assessment - Inadequate Planning - Good Implementation & delivery - Good</p>	<p>Draft Vision and ambition for Youth Offending Services developed and informed by young people and Youth Offending Service practitioners. Ratification of Policy by the YOS (Youth Offending Services) Board.</p> <p>A draft Resettlement Policy has been subject to consultation with partner agencies, Youth Offending Service practitioners, with the final policy to be ratified by the YOS Board.</p> <p>Draft Disproportionality Policy developed with supporting action plan informed by partner agencies.</p> <p>Engagement and agreement with employees and practitioners on</p>

Review	Findings	Our response
	<p>Out-of-court disposal policy and provision - Good</p> <p>6 recommendations were made for Vale Youth Offending Services.</p>	<p>an approach to be embedded into YOS practice.</p> <p>Audit, Quality Assurance and YMB reporting processes agreed and in place in relation to management oversight of cases.</p>

Our key challenges

- Progressing the Vale Alliance has been complicated by Welsh Government’s Primary Care guidance for Pan Cluster Planning Groups which will now require this to be re-evaluated in this context.
- Provider failure is an ongoing concern. In the context of increasing demand for domiciliary care and support, market fragility remains a significant area of concern in terms of the external social care market's capacity and ability to respond to growing demand whilst they continue to be subjected to growing workforce and cost of living pressures.
- There continues to be challenges in the recruitment and retention of staff across key positions in our workforce. There are still some capacity challenges within Children and Young People Services in relation to some Social Work positions and there is insufficient care staff (in both residential and domiciliary care) across the Council and the wider Vale. This also translates across into difficulties in commissioning sufficient care for our residents.
- Linked to increasing levels of demand, the number of children looked after has increased. This places increased pressure on our existing resources and in a placement context, the service has become further reliant on externally purchased care, particularly independent fostering agency placements where availability has also visibly decreased.
- Since the Pandemic, there has been a drive for discharging patients from hospital to home safely. However, the challenge to Adult Social Care Services is that this puts additional pressure and demand on reablement/domiciliary care services to be able to ensure that residents needs are being met and are safely being looked after in their communities.
- Delays in housing building works as a result of the pandemic are also being adversely affected by the current economic environment and cost-of-living crisis e.g. a large builder of Affordable Housing in Wales for many years has recently gone into administration.
- Spiralling rental costs and the cost-of-living crisis present challenges for improving the number of households successfully prevented from becoming homeless. Additionally, there are challenges posed by the changes in homelessness duties and the influx of refugees from Ukraine and other countries.

Areas for future focus

- Continue to progress work with key partners on developing and implementing the Vale Alliance Model.
- Further progress the development of the domiciliary care element to the Primary Care Cluster model and support the accelerated clusters across the Vale.
- Progress the council house building programme and investigate developments with a public/private housing mix to increase the income available to help to develop new sites.
- Continue to work via the capacity planning workstream of the Social Services Reshaping Programme Progress to address the workforce attraction, recruitment, and retention challenges facing Social Services.
- Continue to work with partners to identify and deliver effective interventions for young people at risk of homelessness.
- Work collaboratively across the public and private sector to improve the number of households successfully prevented from becoming homeless.
- Progress work to increase the number of new accessible/adapted homes.

- Progress work on the Whole School Approach to tackling food poverty in schools in line with the Move More, Eat Well agenda.
- Continue to maximise opportunities to signpost citizens to cultural and arts activities designed to enhance their mental health and well-being.
- Continue to support community initiatives aligned with tackling the cost-of-living crisis, including providing advice to staff and citizens.

DRAFT

6.6 Our Annual Delivery Plan Performance by Well-being Objective

WELL-BEING OBJECTIVE 4: To respect, enhance and enjoy our environment

We are committed to protecting and enhancing our environment to ensure we can all be proud of the legacy we will leave for future generations

Actions and Measures aligned to Well-being Objective 4	PERFORMANCE STATUS						Overall RAG Status for Well-being Objective 4	
	Green		Amber		Red			
Actions Measures	Actions	Measures	Actions	Measures	Actions	Measures	Actions and Measures	
50	12	44(88%)	9(75%)	0	0	6(12%)	3(25%)	GREEN

Overall performance (RAG) status for Well-being Objective 4 is **GOOD**. This judgement reflects the good progress made in relation to meeting our Annual Delivery Plan commitments for the period.

What we said we'd do

What we said we'd do	Performance Status
1 Implement Project Zero, our Climate Change Challenge Plan focusing work on our buildings, energy use, transport, land and food	Green
2 Publish a Green Infrastructure Strategy and work with our partners including the Local Nature Partnership to respond to the nature emergency.	Green
3 Improve existing school buildings and deliver new buildings for St Nicholas, St Baruc, the Centre of Learning and Wellbeing, Ysgol y Deri, and primary school provision in Cowbridge, where possible making them low carbon and ideally zero carbon buildings to operate.	Green
4 Deliver near zero carbon, or at a minimum A rated new Council homes to meet carbon reduction targets for the existing Council housing stock and to help tackle fuel poverty.	Green
5 Establish a network of locally accessible Electric Vehicle charging points and undertake work to ensure a more sustainable Council vehicle fleet	Green
6 Encourage and support sustainable changes to how people travel by increasing opportunities for active travel and effective maintenance and repair programmes for our roads and pavements and highway infrastructure.	Green
7 Implement the revised Local Flood Risk Management Strategy including specific schemes alongside the Shoreline Management Plan and coastal monitoring.	Green
8 Gather the evidence base for the review of the Local Development Plan and prepare the vision and objectives/ growth options and the preferred strategy.	Red
9 Invest in education, sustainable transport, and community facilities as a result of negotiating Section 106 payments from developers in areas where development has occurred.	Green

What we said we'd do	Performance Status
10 Review and implement options for community organisations to operate facilities such as sports grounds, parks, open spaces, allotments and public conveniences as part of the Council's Transformation Programme	Green
11 In accordance with the Vale of Glamorgan Waste Management Strategy 2021/31, deliver a range of improvements to waste management.	Green
12 Work with community groups to develop a litter and enforcement strategy recognising the role of the community in improving our local environment.	Green
13 Undertake local air quality assessments to ensure that national air quality objectives continue to be achieved.	Green

What we've achieved

<p>1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Installed Automatic Meter Readers for water consumption across 200 Council buildings. - £179,553 of Strong Communities funding supported community projects. - 100% of our electricity continues to be purchased from renewable sources. - Developed a new Asset Management Strategy. - Electric Recycling Vehicle added to Council's Fleet. - Vale of Glamorgan has achieved Bronze Sustainable Food Places status. - Reviewed our carbon footprint data and identified key opportunities for action. - Installed solar panels on 23 buildings with a combined capacity of almost 1 megawatt.
<p>2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secured funding for a citizen science project to measure biodiversity at schools. - Biodiversity enhancements are now being secured on all developments. - Planted 120 metres of double, staggered row hedgerow, totalling approximately 480 trees on the Great Glamorgan Way. - Developed a 15 year management plan for Cwm Talwg Local Nature Reserve with tools and equipment funded to support implementation. - Identified 61 new sites for wildflower management. - new bulb - S106 has funded bulb and tree planting in The Grange, Wenvoe and Pencoedre Park, Barry and the 'Bee Hapus Garden' in Llantwit Major. - Promotion of free seeds and trees to schools from the Woodland Trust to enhance school grounds.
<p>3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developed new School Investment Strategy. - Ysgol Sant Baruc delivered as low carbon. Net zero carbon in operation schools St Nicholas, Centre for Learning & Well-being and Cowbridge Primary are under construction. - 99% of construction waste from Sustainable Communities for learning programme is recycled or energy recovered to reduce emissions and to avoid landfill.
<p>4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Installed 40 hybrid heating systems and supporting council tenants to operate these. - Installed Airwit sensors in 100 council homes to gather baseline data.

- Staff have enrolled on **PAS2035 Retrofit Coordinator** training.
- Raised average SAP (energy performance rating) of council housing stock to 73 through WHQS improvements.

- 5.**
- **80** Electric Vehicle Charging Points now installed on Council premises with **36** public EV charging points
 - **46** staff purchased bikes through the Council's **Cycle2Work** scheme.

- 6**
- Completed **active travel route through Rhose.**
 - **100% of highways and relevant land** inspected was of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness.
 - Secured funding to install **8 electric bike docking stations** in Barry to expand the OVO electric bike programme. **Brompton Dock also installed** at Llantwit Major interchange.
 - Improved **two pedestrian routes in Barry** to Active Travel (AT) standard.
 - **10** Bus Stop upgrades including new bus shelters and electronic displays.

- 7.**
- New and innovative image-based technology introduced to support shoreline monitoring.
 - Refreshed the **Shoreline management Plan (SMP)** and created a new coastal officer role to assist with delivery of SMP policies across the region.

- 8.**
- Published the **candidate sites register** and results of the Stage 1 assessment.
 - Vision, Issues and Objectives engagement work and further engagement work on growth and spatial options has been completed in relation to the **replacement Local Development Plan.**

- 9.**
- **Invested in community facilities** through S106 funding including the Windmill Lane Play Area, Llantwit Major; St. Cyres Park / St. David's Crescent play area, Penarth; New outdoor fitness equipment at Station Road East, Wenvoe; Murchfield Sports Facilities; Celtic Way Park improvements in Rhose; **Belle Vue Pavilion** refurbishments; **historic shelter** in Penarth.
 - Continued to support the **Greenlinks community transport service.**

- 10.**
- The Penarth **Food Pod** has expanded its range of services and regularly supports **over 100** local people experiencing food poverty.
 - Established an **Information Pod** next to the Food Pod which provides support, information and guidance to local tenants and residents in relation to housing matters, employment, training, money and debt advice.

- 11.**
- Adopted a **10 year Waste Management Strategy.**
 - Opened a new **Resource Recovery Facility (RRF)** to process source separated recycling material, and a new **reuse shop.**
 - **Increased the range of kerbside recyclables** to increase citizen participation including batteries, and small electrical equipment.

- 12.**
- **10 Green park awards** were retained.

- **Green Flag status awarded for 12 sites** across the Vale, as well as four beaches with water quality rated excellent.

13.

- Reviewed **Parking Regulation Orders, resident parking arrangements and revised parking management in Llandough** in response to environmental concerns.
- **71%** of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day, up from 68% last year.
- **624 air quality samples** taken to ensure continued compliance.

Engagement activities: what our residents and service users said

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
<p>Clean Slate Project</p>	<p>Residents from the St Luke and St Paul's Estate Penarth identified improvements to make their communities cleaner, greener, healthier and connected. Over 30 residents participated in the consultation.</p>	<p>There is now active community involvement in using the Food Pod. The local community are involved in developing a plan for a play area for the children.</p> <p>Established a community garden, greenhouse, planting areas with fruit, vegetables and fruit trees around the area, and a designated area for the community to sit and have a coffee in the garden where they are able to connect with their community, volunteers and council staff who operate the site. Involvement in litter picking/skip amnesty to clear up the estate.</p> <p>Developing an information hub, adjacent to the food pod, this will allow us to host a number of agencies who can provide support to the local community, e.g. money advice, healthy living etc.</p>
<p>Creative Communities Engagement: Penarth Esplanade Barry Placemaking Cowbridge Placemaking Llantwit Major Placemaking</p>	<p>A majority of respondents agreed that the Penarth esplanade's highlights were its outdoor seating and dining options, the pier, pavilion and access to the seafront. They also agreed that an upgrade in public facilities and more eating and drinking options would improve the area. The need for pedestrianisation, reduced cars and traffic, better transport links, improved lighting and more outdoor seating was identified.</p>	<p>Penarth local priorities have informed a series of recommendations to the board and Cabinet. This work is informing a Placemaking Plan for Penarth.</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
	<p>Over 70 people attended drop-in sessions.</p> <p>Local priorities being identified by communities in Llantwit Major, Cowbridge and Barry in conjunction with community councils and other key stakeholders.</p>	<p>This work will inform Placemaking Plans for the respective areas.</p>
<p>Section 106 implementation consultations Public Open Spaces at Windmill Lane Play Area, Llantwit Major; St. Cyres Park / St. David's Crescent play area, Penarth; new outdoor fitness equipment at Station Road East, Wenvoe and Lougher Place, St. Athan; Murchfield Sports Facilities, Dinas Powys; Celtic Way Park improvements in Rhoose.</p>	<p>From each of these consultations, it is clear the various communities were passionate about play equipment and recreational facilities being enhanced, and investment within the public realm. Each consultation received strong support. The integration of environmental enhancements as part of each scheme was also welcomed.</p> <p>186 respondents to the consultation on public open spaces at Windmill Lane Play Area, Llantwit Major; 187 respondents to consultation on the St. Cyres Park / St. David's Crescent play area, Penarth; 7 respondents to consultation on the new outdoor fitness equipment at Station Road East, Wenvoe and 22 for Lougher Place, St. Athan; 136 respondents to the consultation on Murchfield Sports Facilities, Dinas Powys; 141 respondents to the Celtic Way Park improvements in Rhoose.</p>	<p>Each consultation enabled the Council to use feedback directly from residents to determine the design brief, which was included in the quotation/tender package. This meant that ideas presented by residents will feed directly into the final scheme, resulting in community ownership.</p>
<p>Wayfinding and mapping project</p>	<p>Lots of content generated for the map from local knowledge. A number of key landmarks selected to be illustrated on the map.</p> <p>Importance of including Porthkerry Park in the map despite being further afield, as an important asset for residents. People also wanted map leaflets and a digital map on their mobile phone as well as on-street map signage.</p>	<p>Wayfinding and mapping resources are richer, with more local knowledge and more relevant. Positive feedback for the map and the colour/design of the maps and signage will mean we can progress publication.</p> <p>Welsh language consultation has resulted in many new and interesting translations for places in Barry which will support Welsh language development in the area.</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
<p>Recycling & Waste Management</p>	<p>52% of respondents agreed with the action points set out within the strategy. There was support for the proposed replacement Household Waste Recycling Centre at Llandow due to the existing site's size and accessibility issues; concern over which material goes into which bag and ability to recycle additional material types e.g. textiles, batteries, soft plastics, nappies, and small electrical items; suggestion that the Council needs to provide more information about end destination of recycled waste; and take enforcement action against residents that do not recycle.</p> <p>431 residents responded to the survey hosted via Participate Vale. Further 12% response rate from 5,000 Vale View Citizens Panel.</p>	<p>The strategy is being implemented with collection blueprint rolled out across most areas of the Vale. Enhancements have been made to the existing kerbside recycling service by adding on small electrical items such as kettles, hair dryers and batteries. Improving waste infrastructure with the construction of a Resource Recovery Facility, the reuse shop, fleet parking in Barry and replacement of Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) at Llandow.</p>
<p>Project Zero Summer Youth Service Engagement Public Services Board (PSB) 3 Horizons Workshop Staff Survey Youth Council Climate Change Engagement Penarth Together for the Climate: A Conversation (Penarth Growing Community)</p>	<p>Provide green spaces in towns; increase recycling, upcycling, and re-use. Waste less energy in homes, buildings, and factories. Local businesses encouraged to recycle. More educational campaigns. Shared recycling points in communities.</p> <p>100 young people attended.</p> <p>PSB (Public Service Board) stakeholders identified the following priorities: completing reuse centre at Barry waste centre; increased use of online platforms e.g., Gum Tree and Too Good To Go to help a sharing economy and reduce waste; more use of renewal energy and less fossil fuel; greater availability of charging point provision for electric vehicles; more integrated, affordable, accessible transport; increase cycle to work schemes and car clubs; Fareshare scheme - assisted allotments to help</p>	<p>Informing PSB (Public Service Board) and key Council plans and initiatives as aligned to Climate Change Emergency and the Project Zero programme.</p>

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
	<p>increase food donations; better use of technology; maximise use of schools and parks as community hubs; consistent and better resourced engagement and involvement community level up. 30 people participated in the workshops.</p> <p>Key staff findings were: Over 80% of respondents agreed that they can make a contribution to [Project Zero] work in their role; 60% agreed that the Council should be taking the lead in tackling Climate Change; 48.5% said they would like to play a greater role in shaping how the Council responds to big issues such as climate change. 1106 (48.5%) staff responded to the survey.</p> <p>Youth council engagement highlighted the need for: more electric public transport; cheaper school buses; more information and advice about unsustainable energy waste; schools raising awareness e.g. PSE days – Climate Change; encourage schools to use more sustainable ideas; more wind power; free public transport for 16 to 18 year-olds.</p> <p>Suggestions from Penarth Growing Community include; maximising opportunities from Penarth's identity as Garden by the Sea; sharing green space, garden share, community allotments; making more growing space in town, less pavements and concrete; pressure on local authority and local representatives, if enough people demand change, it will happen; getting communities together to raise awareness; lobby council on new builds, why aren't they being</p>	

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
	built sustainably. 36 residents participated.	

What our regulators said

Review/ Findings/ Our response
Also applicable under WBO4 is Audit Wales’s review of our application of the Well-being of Future Generation’s Sustainable Development Principle across the Council’s services. This can be viewed via the links provided earlier in the document.

Our key challenges

- There have been financial and resource challenges in delivering a range of improvements to waste management in line with the Council’s Waste Management Strategy 2022-2032, such as the HGV driver shortages, impact of inflationary rises in cost of materials and fuel on capital projects. These have impacted on our performance in relation to achievement of domestic waste recycling targets with an end of year estimated performance of 68% against a target of 71%.
- Completion of the LED replacement scheme for bespoke street lanterns have been delayed pending receipt of specialist lanterns.
- Resource challenges have delayed the development of the Carbon Management Plan 2023-2030.
- Withdrawal of the successful contractor has delayed the delivery of the alternative sewage system for residents at Channel View, Marcross and Croft John, Penmark.
- The number of children needing transport to school, a lack of relief drivers and spiralling costs of provision remains a challenge to our transport service, given our goal to increase service efficiencies and reduce carbon emissions.
- Delivering our commitments to achieve net zero by 2030 will present significant challenges in the short to long-term due to ongoing financial pressures and the challenge associated with decarbonising the supply chain.
- Meeting the costs of the new WHQS standard that focuses on funding zero carbon priorities and new build will require a revenue stream to be available to fund capital borrowing costs and could result in an unviable Housing Business Plan.

Areas for future focus

- Work with Project Gwyrdd partners and Viridor to help deliver the Council’s commitment to achieve statutory recycling targets and contribute to Welsh Government’s ‘Towards Zero’ agenda.
- Complete the LED streetlight conversion programme in line with our carbon reduction commitment.
- Develop and adopt a new Carbon Management Plan 2023-2030.
- Work with key partners to maximise opportunities to deliver near zero carbon, or at a minimum A rated new Council homes to contribute to Project Zero and meet the new WHQS standards.
- Continue to invest in our existing housing stock and improve thermal efficiency including looking at alternative fuel supplies to support carbon reduction and reduce fuel poverty.
- Continue to invest in carbon reduction measures across our assets including the school estate and delivery of major projects to support the delivery of Project Zero.
- Progress work to deliver a sustainable alternative sewage arrangement for residents at Channel View, Marcross and Croft John, Penmark.
- Implement the Project Zero Organisational Learning and Development Plan to raise staff awareness, improve knowledge and provide opportunities for participation.

- Make use of the newly reframed reserve to support delivery of our climate change priorities as outlined in Project Zero.
- Continue undertaking route optimisation of school transport services to ensure pupil safety, increase service efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.
- Finalise and Publish the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy.

DRAFT

7.0 Our Year in Numbers 2022/23

In the absence of national benchmarking data we have continued to assess our performance using local trend data and other service data insights where available. We continue to work with Data Cymru to develop a national self-assessment core dataset to enable us to compare our performance across a range of services. Progress against our Corporate Performance Measures Framework has been reported to the Council's Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet every quarter, including an [end of year \(Quarter 4\) report in July 2022](#).

Below is a selection of performance indicators across our four Well-being Objectives for which data is available and compares our current performance with that of last year's (2021/22). Performance in some continue to be affected by the pandemic, especially where there has been a need to reprioritise resources in response to related challenges.

Well-being Objective 1: To work with and for our communities

3.11 Council diversity staff ratio up from last year's figure of 2.94
12.82 working days lost to sickness absence per employee, rising from 11.35 in 2021/22 ¹
£6,540,848 spent on agency staff, £417,439 less than 2021/22
230 residents used community transport over the year, exceeding last year's figure of 160
Nearly 87% of customer enquiries to C1V resolved at first contact, down slightly on last year's figure of 88%.
97% rate on annual canvass returns, slightly down on last year's figure of 100%.
51.4% of corporate complaints dealt with within target timescales, down on last year's figure of 61%.
No Ombudsman complaints upheld against the Council, from 1 last year.
50% of scrutiny committee recommendations agreed by Cabinet, decreasing from 70% in 2021/22.
1,329,363 Total reach figures for Vale of Glamorgan Life Facebook page, down slightly from 1,384,141.
2,044,600 Total reach figures for @VOGCouncil Twitter account, down from 2,188,700

Well-being Objective 2: To Support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth

0.23% of young people NEET upon leaving Year 12, improving upon last year's figure of 0.35%, ranking 2 nd in Wales.
1.50% of Year 11 leavers became NEET, well below last year's figure of 0.6%, although performance compares favourably with the Welsh average of 2.10%.
2.56% of young people NEET upon leaving Year 13, slightly below last year's performance of 2.3%, ranking 8th in Wales.
98% success rate on accredited courses for priority learners, exceeding last year's figure of 91% and the national comparator.
211 people engaged with the Communities for Work Plus Programme up from 177 people in 2021/22.
99% of householder planning applications determined within 8 weeks increasing from 96.37% in 2021/22.
43 community led organisations financially supported through Vale Heroes and Strong Communities funding, less than last year's figure of 54
Whilst average vacancy rate in the Vale's main town centres increased slightly from 7.6% in 2021/22 to 8.9%, this remains better than Welsh and UK averages.
Number of apprentices on formal recognised apprenticeship schemes within the Council increased from 4.4 in 2021/22 to 10 per 1,000 employees.

¹ Sickness absence benchmarking data for 2022/23 is currently not available. However, out of 12 Welsh LAs, where data has been provided, the Vale ranked joint 8th with worst performing reporting a figure of 15.45 days lost to sickness absence per full time employee and best performing 9.2 days. There was a general increase in absence, coming out of the pandemic, we also saw increases in long term absence for work related stress and increases in absence for operations/recovery.

Youth Service provision awarded the Silver Quality Mark , improving upon its Bronze status last year.
200 tenancies maintained 6 months after receiving money advice, decreasing from 329 tenancies in 2021/22.
264 job entries via CFW and CFW+, rising from 189 in 2021/2022.
£3.686 million of investment dedicated to transport improvement schemes, down on £4.11m in 2021/22.
£4,422M amount secured in S106 contributions to benefit our communities, up from £2.276M in 2021/22. <i>(Figure subject to closure of accounts)</i>
£5,859M of Section 106 contributions spent on enhancements to public transport, walking and cycling networks, new school places, public open space and public art enhancements, up on 2021/22 figure of £5.576M <i>(Figure subject to closure of accounts)</i>
£179,553 of Strong Communities Grant Funding allocated to support community initiatives, up from £162,000 in 2021/22.
5.74M total visitor days to the Vale, down 2.8% from last year from 2019.
£292.49M total economic impact of tourism, down 5.3% from 2019.
3,022 full time equivalent jobs supported by tourism spend down 5.3% from 2019.

Well-being Objective 3: To support people in their homes and in their community

90% of clients' health improved on completion of national exercise referral programme, up from 30.1% last year.
43% of 7-16 year olds participate in sports 3 times a week or more, above Welsh average of 39% but down on previous survey results of 54% in 2018.
71% of pupils took part in sport in a community club setting at least once a week in the last year compared to 56% in Wales, maintaining our performance in the 2018 survey.
99 minutes of curricular P.E. provided in Vale schools per pupil each week, above Welsh average of 93.4 minutes, and down from 103 minutes in 2018 survey.
9971 visits to local authority sport and leisure facilities during the year where the visitor participated in physical activity, up from 6753.3 per 1000 population.
44% of adults aged 16+ participated in sports 3 or more times a week, above the Welsh average of 39% and up on 41% in 2021/22.
8% of adults reported that they currently smoked, below the Welsh average of 13%.
92% of adults reported following 2 or more of the 5 healthy behaviours, just below the Welsh average of 93%.
66% of adults reported that they drank more than the weekly guidelines (that is, average weekly alcohol consumption above 14 units, equivalent to the Welsh average of 66%).
92% of Telecare customers were satisfied with the telecare monitoring service, slightly decreasing from last year's figure of 99.6%
71% of adults 60+ have a concessionary bus pass, slightly down on last year's figure of 72%.
297 days taken to deliver a disabled facilities grant, improving upon 334 days in 2021/22.
97% of food establishments are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards, remaining static from 2021/22, above the UK average of 95%
91% of Supporting People service Users said the support they received helped them to maintain their Independence, slightly down from 92% in 2021/22.
100% of people who received a disabled facilities grant felt that the assistance made them safer and more independent at home, an improvement on 96.5% in 2021/22.
51.47% of households successfully prevented from becoming homeless, Up from 44.9% in 2021/22
100% of domestic abuse victims felt safer as a result of target hardening (safety measures taken), remaining static from 2021/22.
0.01% of rent lost due to properties being empty, improving upon last year's figure of 0.90%.
8.3% of children in care had to move 3 or more times, improving on last year's performance of 10%.

72% affordable housing units were granted planning permission out of all additional housing units granted planning permission, up from 58.5% last year.
14% increase in the number of packages of reablement completed during the year, from 73.3% last year.
84% adults who completed a period of reablement did not need a package of care after 6 months, up from 75% last year.
95% satisfaction with people accessing Families First services, slightly down on 96% last year.
71% adults aged 16+ attended or participated in arts culture or heritage activities three or more times a year above Welsh average of 65% .
76% tenant overall satisfaction with services provided, a lower quartile performance (80%) when compared to 23 housing associations (Housemark Benchmark 2021)
106 properties were subject to extra security measures (target hardening) compared to 116 properties in 2021/22.
285 high risk cases of domestic abuse were discussed at MARAC, with 53% being repeat cases, compared to 363 in 2021/22 of which 45% were repeat cases.

Well-being Objective 4: To respect, enhance and enjoy our environment

£27 per head spent on public transport , lower than the Welsh average of £34, placing the Vale in the bottom quartile in Wales for spending.
2,695 visits to public libraries during the year per 1,000 population, up on 1,117 visits in 2021/22.
67.8% of household waste collected was either prepared for reuse and/or recycled, down on last year's performance of 70.1%
312,403 m2 of parks, open spaces, and highway land sown with wildflowers or maintained as a naturalised area, up on last year's figure of 274,993.38m2 That is equivalent to 44 football pitches.
12 Green Flags were awarded to Parks in the Vale up on last year's performance of 10. A further 16 Community Awarded Spaces managed by volunteers and friend groups, making the Vale of Glamorgan the second most awarded area in Wales for the quality of its green spaces.
98% of highways and relevant land inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness, down on last year's figure of 100%
128kg of residual waste that is not reused, recycled or composted generated per person, slightly down on last year's performance of 126kg.
100% of dangerous structures inspected within 1 working day of receipt, maintaining last last year's performance.
4 of our beaches at Cold Knap, Southerndown, Penarth and Col-Huw rated as having excellent water quality, down from 5 last year.
100% of electricity purchased from renewable resources, mirroring last year's performance.
80 Electric Vehicle Charging Points now installed on Council premises and 36 public EV charging points, up from 18 in 2021/22.

8.0 The Annual Engagement Calendar and key Insights

Citizen engagement features as one of the Council's core values within our Corporate Plan and we proactively encourage residents and customers to share their views and experiences of our services as it promotes engagement, gives us useful customer insight on the relevance of services and enhances our approach to service development. We recognise the importance of working together with Vale citizens and our communities to identify, shape and deliver sustainable community-led solutions to meet our key challenges for the long term. This has become ever more important given the significant challenges we face. If we are to develop innovative responses to them, we will need to harness the talents and potential of all members of the community. That means giving people both a voice and a meaningful role in local decision making.

The Council's Public Participation Strategy published in May 2022, sets out through the Participate Programme how we will make it easier for residents to take part in the decision-making process. As part of this work we have continued to develop and strengthen the Council's internal 'insight' which bringing together a wide range of data sources to help understand local issues and take action to address them. Alongside this, we have also strengthened public engagement and participation through developing a rolling programme of thematic engagement aligned to our annual Well-being Objectives. This cross-cutting engagement across multiple channels which includes our engagement platform Participate Vale, is helping to inform multiple programmes of work and Council decisions.

8.1 The Public Opinion Survey 2023

Engagement insights and our response to these have been reflected throughout the Annual Self-Assessment Report aligned to our four Well-being Objectives and these have informed the areas of focus identified. This year, the Council has also undertaken a Public Opinion Survey and the full data from this survey will be published in the autumn and will inform the Annual Delivery Plan priorities for 2024/25.

The Public Opinion Survey 2023 commenced in September 2023 and is currently still ongoing with nearly 1,800 residents having completed the survey to date. The survey asks residents about their experience of living in the Vale of Glamorgan, which public services are important to them, why and how these services can be improved for the future. Once the survey exercise has been completed at the end of October 2023, the second phase will commence focusing specifically on seldom heard groups to ensure we have a representative set of views to inform our priorities over the coming year in the Annual Delivery Plan 2024/25 and beyond (Corporate Plan 2025-2030). The survey findings once analysed (autumn 2023) will be used to help shape how we deliver services in the future, with a focus on improving people's quality of life, and wherever possible working with residents to address the issues that matter to them.

Early headline findings from the Let's talk about Life in the Vale survey indicate that respondents key areas of concern generally align with the Council's critical challenges as identified in the current Annual Delivery Plan 2023/24 (cost of living, Project Zero - the Council's climate and nature emergency response and organisational resilience, especially in meeting growing demand for core services) which, gives some assurance that our areas of focus in the current year and those emerging from our Annual Self-Assessment findings are headed in the right direction in terms of residents priorities. However, there was significant dissatisfaction from respondents about the quality of council services, whether council services represented value for money, that the Council acts in the interest of local residents and takes their views into account when making a decision. In terms of interaction with the Council, just over half of respondents (53%, 949) stated that they know who their local councillor is with (50%, 897) being aware of some of their councillors' responsibilities.

When asked to prioritise what amenities were most important to them, access to care and health services, a clean and tidy neighbourhood and ability to buy or rent a good quality home were the top three priorities for respondents. Ability to keep fit and healthy for free or at an affordable price, ability to take part in formal learning to gain new skills, and access to arts, cultural or heritage events for free or at an affordable price were the three lowest priorities for respondents. The Council has a role, alongside others, to respond to these priorities and this will inform decision making on the forthcoming budget setting process and development of the Annual Delivery Plan.

As reflected in our self-assessment findings, effective public engagement remains an area of continued focus for the Council. In response to the emerging insights, we have further strengthened the areas of future focus within our self-assessment and reviewed and revised our overall engagement score from 'Good' to 'Fair' to reflect the improvements required in this area. We will continue to improve how we communicate our financial and other challenges, involve and listen to residents and ensure that we are providing clear and simple explanations of how decisions have been taken and the impact they will have on our citizens.

8.2 Complaints and Compliments

We have two separate procedures for dealing with complaints depending on whether they relate to children and young people and adult social care and all other services (corporate). Both have a commitment to being person-centred, fair and clear, with timely outcomes. Whilst each procedure has its own characteristics and response standards, both come under the umbrella of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. This creates a consistent final point of referral if a person remains unhappy after completing the complaints process.

Learning from complaints remains an area of key focus to ensure we continually improve how we manage, monitor and learn from complaints. In 2022/23 just over 52% (205/395) of all complaints (under the **corporate procedure**) were dealt with within target timescales compared to nearly 61% (218/359) in the previous year. The decrease in performance can be partly attributed to colleagues adjusting to the administration of new complaints software (GovService) in August 2022 and an action plan is in place to ensure improved performance in this area, going forward. Despite this, no complaints have been recorded from residents regarding the length of time taken to investigate complaints. During the year, 5.2% of all complaints were escalated to Stage 2 of the process compared to 7% in the previous year. Since the introduction of the new complaints software (GovService) the percentage of cases with a cause recorded has increased from 33% to 100% and Learning Outcome recorded has increased from 10% to 94.69% of cases. This improvement in data capture will, over time, provide improved insight in relation to citizen expectations and service performance, opening up opportunities to improve existing service offerings and providing an important voice of the citizen contribution into future service design. However, for this process to work effectively, there is a need for services to update the system promptly ensuring accurate data informs learning and that the learning outcomes identified are delivered whenever possible.

In terms of lessons learnt during the year, corporately we have identified the need to focus on a number of areas which, in terms of the top three priorities, include: the need to focus on staff training and development (38.46% of recorded learning outcomes) and ensure all are aware of service standards (58.72% of recorded causes of complaint); the need to review and revise information and communication that we provide to our customers (27.13% of learning outcomes); and the need to ensure that all complaints are recorded accurately on GovService to facilitate learning from complaints. The action plan addresses these areas of focus with all service areas and specifically for those areas where it has been identified as an area for focus. To support colleagues in managing complaints effectively in January 2023 the PSOW provided training for front line staff and those with responsibility for investigating complaints. In March 2023 a series of "Retrospectives" were held with colleagues with responsibility for administering complaints. Opportunities to improve the performance of the new software and create new functionality were identified and these are being taken forward for delivery in 2023/24.

Where residents have exhausted the Council's complaints procedures and remain unhappy they are entitled to escalate their complaints to the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales' (PSOW) for consideration. During 2022/23, no Ombudsman complaints were upheld against the Council in comparison, to 1 in 2021/22.

51 complaints relating to **Social Services** were received during the year, 26 of which were discontinued during the year (either through no further contact or the complaint was not able to be considered within the complaints process). Of the 25 remaining complaints, 89.2% were resolved within the designated timescales, 9.5% were resolved outside of timescales and 1.3% (3) of complaints remained open at end of year, so continued forward into 2023/24.

Key lessons learned include: the need for clear and ongoing contact with service users and families to keep them updated. Reminding staff to respond swiftly and appropriately where errors, complaints or concerns are raised; setting clear expectations of service delivery with clear outlines of costs, timescales and what level of service can be provided in challenging times; the need to record more specific data about complaints and enquiries to give a more detailed understanding of areas for improvement; the need to streamline the reporting of compliments and complaints and encourage the sharing of positive stories; to support timely and effective communication with those using our services and to ensure teams and individual workers identify their contact emails, telephone numbers to support appropriate communication.

Social Services complaints are increasingly becoming more complex, and this has impacted on the timeliness of our response. Despite this we continue to work with key stakeholders to improve our responsiveness to complaints within the designated timescales. It must be noted that all complaints dealt with outside of the designated timescales have been undertaken with the agreement of complainants to an extension, although this is not reflected in the statutory timescales.

9.0 How we are using our resources and governance

Overall judgement for 'how we are using our resources' is **GOOD**.

A resilient Council is one that is well governed, is innovative, plans effectively for now and the future and lives within its means. To support the delivery of our Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives and contribute to the national goals, we have to make sure that we are using our resources efficiently, effectively and equitably. This is in line with the sustainable development principle set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Throughout the year we have continuously assessed how well we are using our resources to enable us to deliver on our commitments in the Annual Delivery Plan 2022/23. [Annual Directorate Self-Assessments](#) aligned to the performance calendar enable us at end of year to bring together key insights from across the council's services to inform our overall judgement of how well we have used our resources. The assessment also enables us to sense check our progress in embedding the sustainable development principle in how we work to meet the changing demands on core services and ensure their sustainability for the long-term. Current and emerging

medium to long term challenges and opportunities identified through this assessment will inform our Annual Self-Assessment findings and the next iteration of the Annual Delivery Plan.

An internal peer ‘critical friend’ challenge of Directorate Self-Assessment findings has been undertaken, followed by further challenge through a moderation exercise led by the Chief Executive, the Director of Corporate Resources and the Executive Leader of the Council to confirm the overall council judgement. Based on our assessment (which included a reflection on last year’s judgements), we have attributed a council-wide rating of ‘**Good**’ to reflect our progress as outlined below, which mirrors last year’s judgement.

Corporate enablers: Overall Council Summary	2021/22 Rating	2022/23 Rating	Direction of Travel (DoT)
How well are we managing our people?	Good	Good	↔
How well are we managing our finance, commissioning and procurement?	Good	Good	↔
How well are we managing our assets?	Good	Good	↓*
How well are we performing and managing our risks?	Good	Good	↔
How well are we engaging and using engagement insight?	Good	Fair	↓*2
Overall rating for ‘how we are using our resources’	GOOD	GOOD	↔

* Overall DoT in relation to managing our assets reflects the significant challenges facing the Council in this area.

*2 Revised our score from ‘Good’ to ‘Fair’ in light of emerging engagement insights as part of the self-assessment process. This reflects the significant work required to improve our approach to communicating with residents about our financial and other challenges, involve, listen and feedback on the decisions we take that impact on them.

A judgement of ‘**Good**’ means that:

- Our management of resources (people, physical and digital assets, finance and procurement, is deemed good and is in a strong position to secure future service improvements sustainably.
- We have robust mechanisms/practices in place to operate our services economically, efficiently, effectively and equitably.
- The 5 ways of working is understood and given consideration in planning, decision making and operating our resources to meet our Well-being Objectives and can be evidenced.
- Equality considerations are understood and given consideration in planning, decision making and operating our resources to identify and reduce inequalities of outcome associated with socio-economic disadvantage and can be evidenced.
- We have good insight/evidence/examples of how we have used our resources to enhance performance, achieved outcomes and/or met need.
- We have a clear understanding of what we need to do to improve to enhance our performance and secure continuous improvement. We have a plan in place to address these areas of improvement.

9.1 What have we achieved

People

- Developed a People Strategy and key supporting strategies to reflect the new ways of working that support the delivery of the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives.
- Built on good relationships with local education establishments, Independent Apprenticeship providers and the KickStart and our local Quick Start and apprenticeship schemes to provide more accessible training and development opportunities on the job with identified carer pathways. This is part of efforts to attract young talent into the council.
- Developed a Learning plan to support the growth of skills and competence aligned to our People Strategy and Corporate Plan. Enhanced the performance appraisal process, providing a robust platform for assessment staff performance and a supportive framework for developing staff to meet the challenges ahead.

- Developed People dashboards utilising Power BI to assist the organisation to make informed choices based on statistical information. This will allow line managers to understand trend analysis and make more informed decisions based on key data in areas such as recruitment, diversity and talent and succession.
- Developed and enhanced our Health, Safety and Well-being support, revising and enhancing policies and procedures, in addition to strengthen the skills of our schools and line managers in key qualifications, such as IOSH (Institute of Occupational Safety and Health).
- Delivered a comprehensive Member Induction Programme to support all members including co-opted members in their new roles.
- Heavily invested in well-being across our workforce through many initiatives.
- Embraced more creative approaches to address our recruitment challenges resulting in success in key service areas such as social services, shared regulatory services, planning and regeneration and neighbourhood services and transport.
- Critically reviewed and put in place measures to strengthen workforce planning arrangements to enable us to plan effectively for the future.
- Further developed our staff diversity networks to ensure we are an inclusive employer.

Assets

- Sustained investment in digital infrastructure and delivered a range of digital developments to improve our resilience over the medium to long term e.g. Oracle Fusion, Granicus, MS365, Bang the Table (online engagement platform), E-petition scheme. We have also contributed to increased inclusion and service access, reduced costs and increased transparency to citizens and other stakeholders.
- Published our new Corporate Asset Management strategy (2023-28) which has focused on maximising use of our assets over the medium term in the most sustainable way.
- Successfully appealed a number of Non-Domestic Rating Assessments for our corporate estate, resulting in significant NNDR (National Non-Domestic Rates) rebates to the Council and savings.
- Successfully delivered a significant circa £6m capital programme, in challenging circumstances.

Finance

- Published our Financial Strategy and rolling five-year Medium Term Financial Plan and developed budget proposals for 2023/24 informed by the priorities of Vale citizens.
- Successfully introduced a savings programme and worked collaboratively with service areas to monitor progress with savings.
- Developed and adopted a Procurement policy and strategy which has introduced a requirement of social value in council contracts and outlines our approach to ethical practice, supporting the local economy, employment and climate action.
- Entered into a shared service arrangement with Cardiff, Monmouthshire and Torfaen councils to provide greater resilience, streamline our processes and to drive future procurement efficiencies.
- Continued to take an integrated approach to maximising our use of various grant funding streams in creative ways to achieve maximum outcomes as aligned to our Well-being Objectives.
- Successfully secured external capital and revenue funding to support our communities and businesses and invest in our regeneration assets, including Shared Prosperity Funding, Brilliant Basics, NRAW (Great Glamorgan Way) and Thaw river catchment tree planting.
- Established a Shared Prosperity Fund board ensuring funding is being allocated with a focus on community benefit and business growth.

Performance and Risk

- Developed the use of PowerBI as a platform to present key insight data, including from the Census, the Well-being Assessment and topic specific areas of work such as Project Zero and Cost-of-Living in addition to the creation of People Dashboards.

- Progressed the recommendations from Audit Wales local and national studies, making connections between these and key areas of focus such as poverty, cost of living, warm spaces and food support involving key partners including third sector organisations and our communities.
- There is a focus on streamlining our asset management activities informed by the Corporate Landlord Model review project.
- Our review of the sufficiency of Welsh medium ALN provision is informing development of further provision in line with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).
- Ensured that our schools received support from CSCJES (Central South Consortium Joint Education Service) to deliver identified improvements that have a positive impact and add value.
- Continued to make improvements to the Welsh Community Information System platform to with a focus on ensuring timely and proportionate recording to inform and improve service delivery.

Engagement & Insight

- Embedded an integrated approach to delivery of the Public Participation Strategy through the Public Participation Practitioner Network (PPPN), Member Champions Network and the Equalities Consultative Forum.
- Collaborated with key partners including the voluntary and third sector to embed an integrated approach to co-ordinating our response to key challenges and supporting community initiatives e.g. tackling the cost-of-living crisis, community regeneration initiatives.
- Successfully delivered and run Local Government Elections and the annual Canvass, in line with our commitment to increase participation in local democracy.
- Put in place an action plan to improve the scrutiny of our decisions and encourage public participation in the process.
- Significantly invested digital technology to widen engagement reach and participation including seldom held groups and children and young people.

Engagement activities: what our residents and service users said

What we engaged on	What the key findings were	What changed/improved as a result
Staff Well-being survey	Percentage of engagement index as part of Employee Well-being Survey improved from 70% to 71%. Employee Well-being, development and rewards and benefits were key themes identified.	Enhanced well-being provision for staff by increasing services and opportunities. Increasing development opportunities to support future skills and development and a learning culture. Reviewing employee pay, and wider reward and benefits offering.

What our regulators said

Review/ Findings/ Our response
Also applicable in our use of resources is Audit Wales’s reviews of our Workforce Planning and Asset Management arrangements and our application of the Well-being of Future Generation’s Sustainable Development Principle across the Council’s services referenced earlier under Well-being Objectives 1 and 4. These can be viewed via the links provided.

Our key challenges

People

- Significant challenges remain in some service areas in attracting and retaining staff, exacerbated by budget pressures, national skills shortages and market forces. Nationally, local government remains the lowest paying part of the public sector and consequently lacks attractiveness as a career choice. Thinking long term, there is an opportunity to work collaboratively with education establishments, independent apprenticeship providers and other public sector organisations for the development of new skills and capability career pathways into local government to attract new talent which will help to develop the pipeline of skills we need to create a resilient workforce for the future.
- There is a need to further evaluate models to reduce cost escalation in key services such as social and health care through rising agency prices. We need to maximise opportunities to engage and work with our partner organisations to develop wider approaches to the recruitment challenge.
- There is a challenge in supporting the cultural shift to use digital technology.

Assets

- There are challenges associated with encouraging schools to maximise the use of their physical and digital assets to support our vision for all schools to be at the heart of their communities offering wider community services. Strategic utilisation of opportunities such as the Community Focused Grant will be key in supporting this work.
- The success of placemaking plans remain dependent on active Community and Town Councils involvement in identifying a shared vision. In addition, deliverability will increasingly depend on how successful we are at securing external funding which is often short term in nature, this presents capacity and resource challenges in supporting communities.
- The level of investment required to sustain progress and meet increasing demand for quick, efficient and highly responsive digital services from our citizens and other key stakeholders over the long term will be challenging given already stretched budgets and resources.
- Supply issues and the escalating cost of materials continue to impact on the deliverability of capital projects such as the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme and Council house building programme. Cost pressures are particularly being felt in relation to outstanding projects which have caused delays and in the case of the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme, it remains uncertain whether additional investment from the Welsh Government will be available to mitigate increased costs.

Finance

- Single year financial settlements continue to impact on long term financial planning and financial sustainability, and we will continue to make the case for multiyear settlements and for more long-term certainty around funding and budgets.
- We need to improve public participation in the budget setting process, especially around service redesign and greater challenge is required from Scrutiny Committees.
- Delivering our commitments to achieve net zero by 2030 will present significant challenges in the short to long-term due to ongoing financial pressures and the challenge associated with decarbonising the supply chain.
- Effectively utilising grant funding to support the delivery of society-wide initiatives and ensuring that all organisations involved can contribute, influence and work differently to support communities will become ever more important giving declining budgets. We will need to become even more creative and flexible to maximise opportunities, despite the often-complicated funding conditions associated to these grants.
- Managing public expectations when working with and delivering services for our community with reduced funding and less resources available to us will continue to present challenges and these will need to be carefully managed.
- We need to proactively investigate new income opportunities with a view to maximise income from all sources to enable us to continue to deliver valued services into the long term.

Performance and Risk

- There is a need to further strengthen and embed our monitoring of schools causing concern to ensure a proactive approach to supporting school improvement. Additionally, we need to work with the CSC to identify areas of support that requires strengthening.
- There is a need further strengthen our evaluative processes to measure the impact our work around equalities is having on service users, learners, protected groups and citizens overall.
- A key challenge of the Local Development Plan Review process is the tightly controlled delivery agreement with the Welsh Government. If the review were to slip by more than 3 months, this opens the Council to further risk and would require us to prepare and consult on a new delivery agreement.
- Delivering the effective scrutiny action plan will require input from all elected members involved in Scrutiny Committees and the availability of resource to support new and innovative methods of scrutiny, including research and insight support.
- Pupil attendance continues to be a key area of focus. Post-pandemic we have seen a fall in attendance rates, particularly across our secondary schools. There is a declining three-year trend in attendance across both primary and secondary schools which needs to be addressed.
- Ensuring sufficiency of provision to address the increasing demand and complexity of children and young people's social, emotional, and mental well-being (primary and secondary) continues to present significant financial and resource challenges. The key challenge for schools is the increasing number of children and young people displaying very complex SEMH (Social, Emotional, Mental-Health) difficulties which in turn have a significant impact on their ability to learn and to interact positively with adults and peers.

Engagement and Insight

- There is a challenge of capacity and expertise to develop and implement new approaches to involvement, engagement and consultation, as well as in the modelling and analysis of data through platforms such as PowerBI to support decision making about services and planning for the long term.
- There is a need to further enhance the inclusivity of our engagement activities to ensure we can effectively reach 'seldom heard voices' and protected groups to strengthen our knowledge and understanding of individual groups and community needs. We also need to embed a focus on using engagement as a mechanism to further understand the 'lived experience' of our service users, learners and citizens to better identify and map community needs with the insight shaping the design and development of sustainable services into the longer term.

Areas for future focus

People

- Work collaboratively with education establishments, independent apprenticeship providers and other public sector organisations for the development of new skills and capability career pathways into local government to attract new talent. This will help to develop the pipeline of skills we need to create a resilient workforce for the future.
- Develop a robust Attraction and Recruitment Strategy to address workforce pressures and future skills requirements. Focusing on our Employer Brand.
- Maximise opportunities to engage and work with our partner organisations to develop wider approaches to the recruitment challenges e.g. social care and health.
- Review our wider reward strategy and benefits offering to help attract and retain talent.
- Through the People Strategy and Workforce Development Plan, continue to progress the development of workforce skills as aligned to the Council's Reshaping Programme and strengthen the application of the Sustainable Development principle in relation to workforce planning in response to Audit Wales recommendations.
- Progress work to address the needs of staff in the new digital work environment to support the cultural shift to use digital technology.
- Further support the development of our organisation's culture.
- Further support the Council's diversity networks and roll-out relevant training and support to staff.

Assets

- Develop an Investment Strategy for our physical assets with a focus on net zero/low carbon and long-term sustainability as part of Project Zero.
- Keep under review the School Reorganisation and Investment Programme to reflect and address emerging pressures/challenges around suitability/viability of our physical assets.
- Work with our schools to become more community focused in using their physical and digital assets to support our vision of schools being at the heart of their communities and offering wider community services.
- Work collaboratively with key stakeholders and engage with our communities to identify opportunities including innovative funding approaches to support the decarbonisation of our assets and delivery of major projects.
- Approve and adopt a new Carbon Management Plan.
- Approve and adopt the new Digital Strategy.
- Maximise opportunities to expand shared working spaces and make better use of the Council's property portfolio informed by the landlord model review.
- Develop a rolling programme of projects as part of placemaking plans to take advantage of external funding opportunities.

Finance

- Continue to lobby Welsh Government for genuine multiyear settlement to enable effective financial planning for the long term.
- Improve on our arrangements for producing a rolling five-year medium term financial plan incorporating a genuine five-year horizon, external challenge and benchmarking, more transformational savings (i.e. invest to save, early intervention and digital transformation), improved public participation and more effective scrutiny.
- Deliver the Non-Treasury Investment Strategy which outlines more commercial approaches to bringing in income, including risk appetite.
- Improve recovery of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates and improve the Council's income collection function.
- Make use of the newly reframed reserves to support the Council to deliver transformational change, mitigate risks and invest in our communities to support key organisational priorities.
- Increase public participation in the budget setting and decision-making process and improve their awareness and understanding of the Council and its finances.

Performance and Risk

- Progress work with our partners to implement the recommendations from Audit Wales's reviews of the Council's Reshaping Services Programme, Third Sector Working, Application of the Sustainable Development Principle in our services to support delivery of our Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives.
- Further strengthen our evaluative processes to measure the impact our work around equalities is having on service users, learners, protected groups and citizens overall.
- Continue to strengthen and embed our monitoring of schools causing concern to ensure that we can take a proactive approach to supporting school improvement.
- Work with the CSC JES (Central South Consortium Joint Education Services) to identify areas of support that requires strengthening.
- Progress work to deliver the replacement Local Development Plan.
- Develop a Data Strategy that supports an integrated approach to our use of performance insight and intelligence to inform decisions as part of the Council's Digital Strategy.
- Strengthen internal scrutiny and challenge supported by new and innovative methods of scrutiny, including research and insight as outlined in the Effective Scrutiny Action Plan.
- Enhance opportunities to address common issues such as pupil attendance across a regional footprint.

- Work collaboratively to ensure sufficiency of provision to address the increasing demand and complexity of children and young people's social, emotional, and mental well-being (primary and secondary) needs.

Engagement and Insight

- Further develop our use of data insight by strengthening our use of digital tools like PowerBI to enable us to better interrogate data that can be used to help inform decisions about services and in planning for the long term.
- Strengthen our understanding of the drivers of demand and engage with service users and our communities to redesign and co-produce services.
- Continue to work across the Council and with partners to develop our collective capacity for citizen/customer engagement and our use of these insights alongside performance and other data insights to inform future service developments.
- Enhance the inclusivity of our engagement activities to ensure we can effectively reach 'seldom heard voices' and protected groups to strengthen our knowledge and understanding of individual groups and community needs.
- Strengthen how we use engagement as a tool to demonstrate evidence-based decision making and improve how we provide feedback to our citizens on what has changed/improved as a result e.g. 'you said we did.'
- Embed focus on using engagement as a mechanism to better understand the 'lived experience' of our service users, learners and citizens to better identify and map community needs with the insight shaping the design and development of sustainable services into the longer term.

9.1 Governance

There is **'Reasonable Assurance'** on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's framework of governance, risk management and control for 2022/23, based on the Head of Internal Audit's annual opinion.

The Council, as part of its arrangements for corporate governance, undertakes an annual review of internal control and governance with the resulting [Annual Governance Statement \(AGS\)](#) included within the Statement of Accounts. The AGS therefore provides an assessment of the Council's corporate governance arrangements and an appraisal of the controls in place to manage the Council's key risks and identifies where improvements need to be made.

Key performance and other insights from the annual performance calendar of activities, have informed the evidence base for the AGS which describes how the Council has complied with its Code of Corporate Governance as aligned to the CIPFA and SOLACE Framework - Delivering Good Governance in Local Government 2016 with a focus on the following principles:

- A - Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.
- B - Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
- C - Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.
- D - Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.
- E - Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.
- F - Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.
- G - Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit, to deliver effective accountability.

The AGS concludes that from the review, assessment and on-going monitoring work undertaken that reasonable assurance can be given that the governance arrangements for the Vale of Glamorgan Council continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework.

10. Reviewing our Self-Assessment approach

It is important that our approach to self-assessment continues to evolve to drive improvement as aligned to our Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives and the national well-being goals. Based on our review throughout the process **and feedback from key stakeholders and partners**, the following areas will require continued focus in readiness for the 2023/24 annual self-assessment. These will be considered alongside ~~any additional findings from~~ feedback from Welsh Government, Audit Wales, the WLGA and any identified best practice from colleagues across Wales.

- Further rationalise our approach to Directorate Self-assessment dovetailing this with existing arrangements for quarterly self-reflection undertaken by Directorates as part of corporate arrangements for performance monitoring and reporting of the Annual Delivery Plan.
- Further align the reporting requirements of other regulatory bodies e.g. CIW and Estyn within the Directorate self-assessments to demonstrate integration of working with the findings informing multiple corporate work programmes as aligned to delivery of our well-being outcomes.
- Strengthen our use of performance and other data insights throughout the year to support performance judgements at end of year. This forms part of ongoing work to develop our internal insight function which will help to strengthen our evidence base for the Council's Self-Assessment.
- We currently bring together key partners and stakeholders to consider the emerging self-assessment findings and areas for future focus to provide an opportunity for feedback and further challenge. However, there are opportunities to further strengthen our internal 'critical friend' challenge by involving external key stakeholders in the internal Peer Challenge. Engagement with these key stakeholders will also ensure we become more outward facing.
- Further strengthen elected member involvement in the Peer Challenge process. Extending the breadth of participation will ensure that we have a broader spectrum of involvement in the process and will also ensure a wide range of perspectives are taken into account whilst ensuring there is ownership of any changes being identified and proposed.
- Following publication of the Council's first Annual Self-Assessment under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act, we invited Internal Audit Colleagues to undertake a review to provide assurance of the process, and to ensure appropriate arrangements were in place to enable accurate production and timely publication of our findings in line with legislation. There is an opportunity to repeat this audit annually for added challenge of our approach, ensuring that we continue to build on the 'substantial' audit opinion achieved in Year 1.
- **Strengthen aspects of the Annual Self-Assessment Report including:**
 - **Produce and widely circulate a public summary document as part of engagement work informed by feedback from residents and members on how they would like the Council's performance information reported.**
 - **Within the 'Annual Engagement Calendar and Key Insights' section of the Annual Self-Assessment report, provide an overview of major council decisions that have been made during the year, including outlining the rationale for council decisions, the resulting changes and impact (positive and negative) on residents and communities. Incorporate a summary of the areas of emerging concern from elected members informed by the Member Champions network and views of all members from their role as community representatives.**
 - **Provide a summary in next year's Annual Self-Assessment report highlighting the key successes achieved in the past year through partnerships and collaborative working including work with The Third Sector and Town and Community Councils to give greater visibility to how these have contributed to delivering our Annual Delivery Plan commitments and the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives.**
 - **Give further consideration to how engagement findings are presented in the self-assessment report to ensure the information is clear, quantifiable and more easily accessible.**

Annual Self- Assessment 2022/23: Consultation Findings Summary

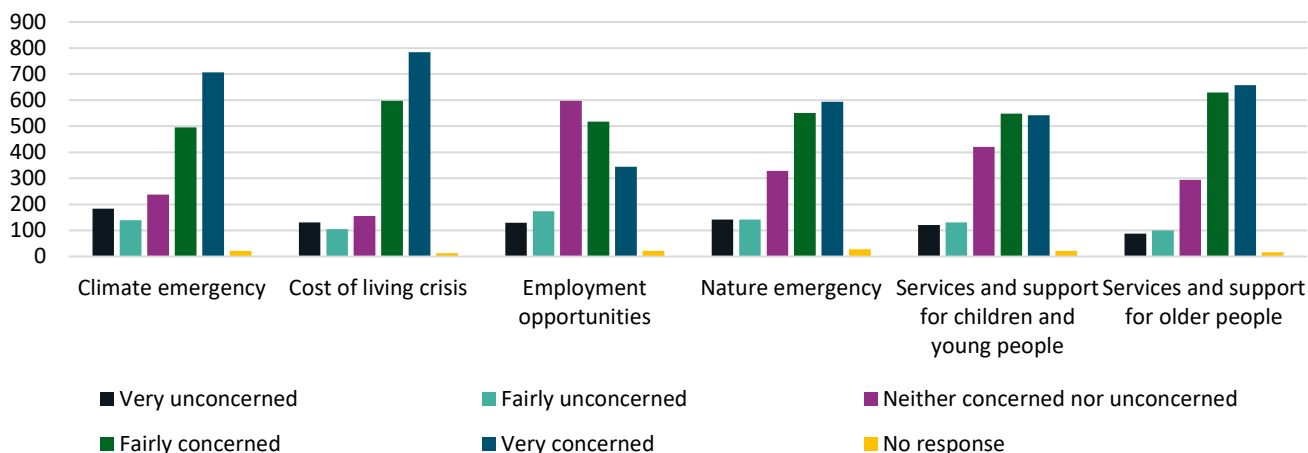
Consultation on the Self-Assessment findings is a statutory requirement. However, each council must decide an approach that enables it to have an appropriate and representative cross section of key stakeholders' views informing the findings. Given poor response rates in previous years to stand alone surveys on our performance, a wider approach to engagement has been adopted (through the Council's Public Participation Strategy) that enables us to use the insights gained throughout the year on the performance of a wide range of services alongside standalone corporate public engagement exercises (such as the Let's Talk Public Opinion Survey and the annual budget consultation), social media feedback and community focused engagement to ensure stakeholder views are appropriately reflected in the Council's Self-Assessment findings. To give more visibility to the breadth of engagement work being undertaken across Council services, throughout the report we have also referenced examples of service level engagement work to support our performance judgements as aligned to our Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives. Below provides overview of the some of the key public engagement and consultation work that has been undertaken throughout the year which has also informed our emerging areas for future focus.

Public Opinion Survey (POS) 2023 Let's talk about Life in the Vale (September - October 2023)

The Council's Public Opinion Survey 2023 commenced in September 2023 and is currently still ongoing with nearly 1,800 residents having completed the survey to date. The survey asks residents about their experience of living in the Vale of Glamorgan, which public services are important to them, why and how these services can be improved for the future. Once the survey exercise has been completed at the end of October 2023, the second phase will commence focusing specifically on seldom heard groups to ensure we have a representative set of views to inform our priorities over the coming year in the Annual Delivery Plan 2024/25 and beyond (Corporate Plan 2025-2030). The survey findings once analysed (autumn 2023) will be used to help shape how we deliver services in the future, with a focus on improving people's quality of life, and wherever possible working with residents to address the issues that matter to them.

Some early headline findings from the 'Lets' talk about Life in Vale' survey are outlined below. It must be noted that the data presented below currently does not reflect a representative cross-section of Vale citizens' views as engagement work as part of the POS remains ongoing to ensure we encourage participation from all parts of our community, especially traditionally hard to reach/engage/under-represented groups. Taking an inclusive approach will ensure that a wide range of views inform our priorities, shape our plans and service improvements going forward, including our approach to working with communities on decisions that affect their local area.

When residents were asked about their key concerns, top of the list was the cost of living crisis with nearly 78% (1391) respondents stating that they were fairly (601) or very concerned (790). Services and support for older people was the next highest area of concern with 73.6% (1297) respondents stating that they were either fairly (635) or very concerned (662). 68% (1213) of respondents stated they were either fairly concerned (502) or very concerned (711) fairly concerned about the Climate emergency. The fourth area of concern was the nature emergency with 65% (1155) of respondents stating they were either fairly (557) or very concerned (598). Services and support for Children and young people came fifth on respondents list of areas of concern with nearly 62% (1100) stating they were fairly (553) or very concerned (547). 49% (871) stated they were fairly (524) or very concerned (347) about employment opportunities.



The areas of concern highlighted by respondents align with the Council’s critical challenges as identified in the current Annual Delivery Plan 2023/24 and relate to cost of living, Project Zero - the Council’s climate and nature emergency response and organisational resilience, especially in meeting growing demand for core services. This gives some assurance that our areas of focus in the current year and those emerging from our Annual Self-Assessment findings are headed in the right direction in terms of residents priorities.

Residents were also asked to prioritise what amenities were most important to them and ranking them. Access to care and health services, a clean and tidy neighbourhood and ability to buy or rent a good quality home were the top three priorities for respondents. Ability to keep fit and healthy for free or at an affordable price, ability to take part in formal learning to gain new skills, and access to arts, cultural or heritage events for free or at an affordable price were the three lowest priorities for respondents. The Council has a role, alongside others, to respond to these priorities and this will inform decision making on the forthcoming budget setting process and development of the Annual Delivery Plan.

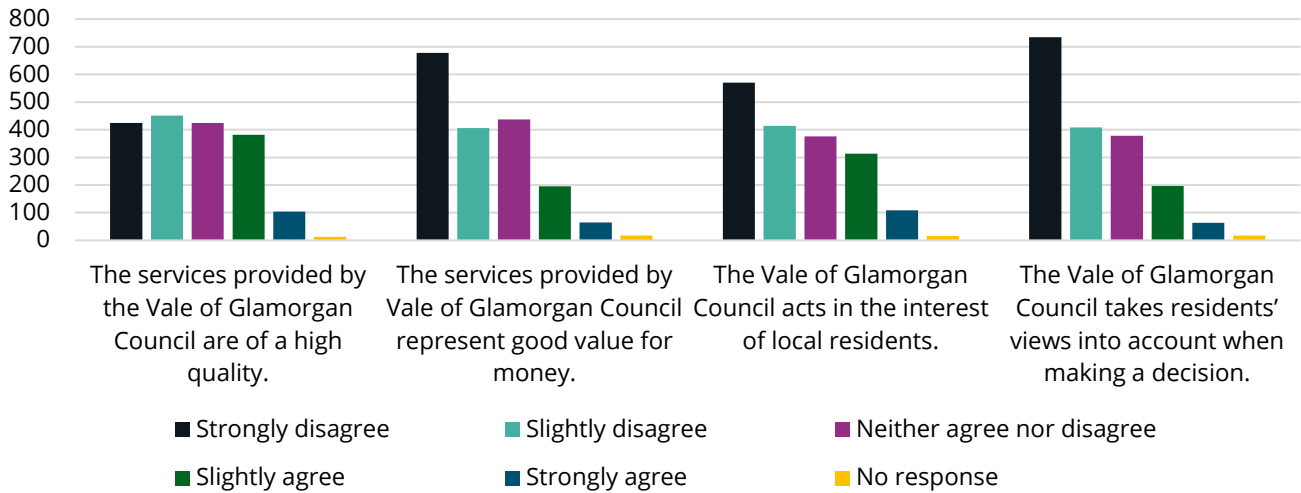
Amenity	Rank
Being able to easily access care and healthcare services when my family or I need them	1
Being able to live in a neighbourhood that is clean and tidy	2
Being able to buy or rent a good quality home	3
Being able to access regular recycling and waste collections	4
Being able to enjoy the natural environment (e.g. visit a park, beach, the countryside)	5
Being able to travel on well-maintained public highways (e.g. roads, pavements, cycle lanes, shared pathways)	6
Being able to shop for food and everyday items within my local area	7
Being able to access good quality local nurseries and schools for my children or those in my community to attend	8
Being able to do things that keep me fit and healthy for free or at a price I can afford	9
Being able to take part in formal learning (e.g. an evening class) to help me gain new skills	10
Being able to engage with arts, cultural or heritage events (e.g. go to a library, view artworks, go to a concert, visit a historical site) for free or at a price I can afford	11

Residents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements about the Council. 27% (486) of respondents stated that they slightly (382) or strongly (104) agreed that the services provided by the Council are of a high quality. Nearly 49% (875) of respondents strongly (424) or slightly (451) disagreed with this statement. Nearly 24% (425) respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

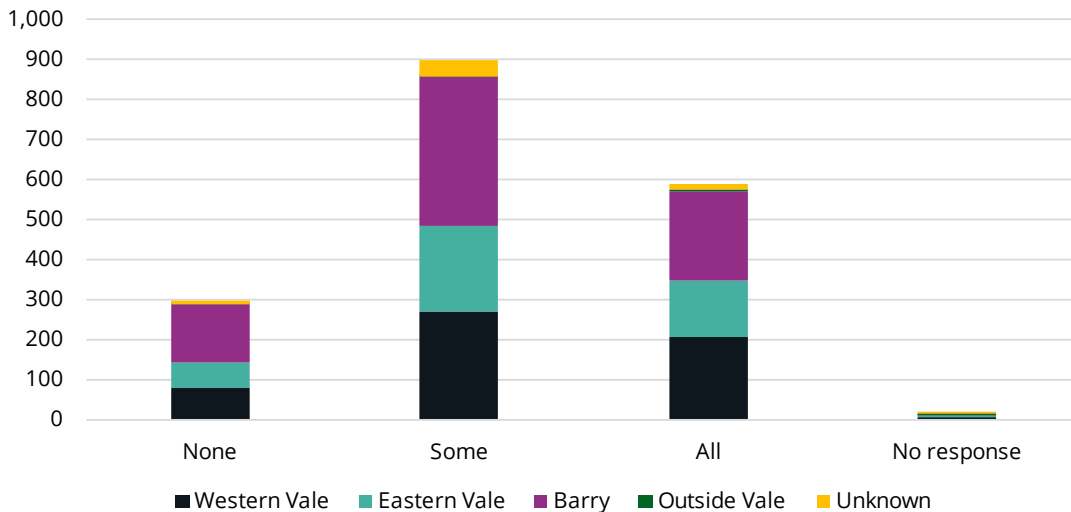
Nearly 15% (261) of respondents slightly (196) or strongly (65) agreed that the services provided by the Council represent good value for money. Nearly 61% (1084) of respondents strongly (678) or slightly (406) disagreed with this statement. 24% (437) respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

Nearly 24% (423) of respondents slightly (314) or strongly (109) agreed that the Vale of Glamorgan Council acts in the interest of local residents. 55% (984) respondents strongly (570) or slightly (414) disagreed with this statement. 21% (376) of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

In relation to, 'The Vale of Glamorgan Council takes residents' views into account when making a decision', Nearly 15% (261) respondents slightly (197) or strongly (64) agreed with this statement. 64% (1143) strongly (735) or slightly (408) disagreed with this statement. Just over 21% (378) of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.



In terms of their interaction with the Council, residents were asked if they know who their local councillor is. 53% (949) of respondents said they did compared to 47% (829) who did not know. When asked to what extent they were aware of the responsibilities of their local councillors, 33% (588) respondents stated that they were aware of all the responsibilities of their local councillor, 50.3% (897) were aware of some responsibilities and a further 16.7% (297) were aware of none of the responsibilities of their local councillor. 80% (592/737) of respondents from Barry were aware of some or all the responsibilities of their local councillor. 85% (357/419) of respondents from the Eastern Vale were aware of some or all of their local councillors responsibilities. In relation to the Western Vale nearly 86% (474/552) of respondents were aware of some or all their local councillors responsibilities.



Overview of social media sentiment on Council engagement 2023

Throughout the year we share news and information about Council services, decision making, and events in the Vale of Glamorgan via our social media accounts. There are thousands of interactions with citizens (measured by likes, shares, comments, and link clicks) via these channels every month. We also occasionally seek feedback on our services directly using social media.

The way in which citizens engage with the content we share online tells us a lot about how they view our services and how we can get better at informing people about our work.

The content that we share receives a lot of interaction, particularly on Facebook. Engagement is generally positive. The greatest number of positive interactions typically come from posts sharing news and information about new community facilities and services. For example, the opening of the new Belle Vue community centre in August received 5,294 generally positive engagements on Facebook; the opening of Ysgol Sant Baruc school received 10,307 generally positive engagements in April.

However, we do also see significant levels of negative engagement when sharing other types of content. The greatest number of negative interactions typically come from us sharing news and information relating to changes to council services, particularly those perceived as reductions. Changes to recycling and waste services in July attracted a large number of negative comments and reactions on Facebook.

To seek to address this we are always working to find more effective ways to present information with clear and simple explanations of how decisions have been taken and the impact we believe they will have. This is something we will continue to do.

Staff Consultation – StaffNet promotion of emerging ASA findings/ Learning Café workshop (October 2023)

The Annual Self-Assessment report has been discussed with the Strategic Leadership Team and communicated to staff. We have also promoted this on the Council’s Staffnet and a Learning Café workshop is planned for October 2023 to give colleagues another opportunity to feed into the overall findings. This forms part of the internal challenge process enabling colleagues across the Council to sense-check the emerging findings, ensuring they are reflective of the current position and to identify how they can contribute in their roles to the Council’s improvement journey. Feedback including any additional areas for future focus, opportunities for innovation across service areas and the Council as a whole will be reflected in the final Annual Self-Assessment report and will also inform the development of the Annual Delivery Plan 2024/25.

Social media responses to our emerging areas for future focus (October 2023)

We are sharing bite size excerpts of the emerging areas for future focus from the Council’s Annual Self-Assessment findings during October 2023. Any comments from these social media posts will be reflected in the final Annual Self-Assessment report and will also inform the development of the Annual Delivery Plan 2024/25.

Consultation with Elected Members (September 2023)

Consultee	Comments	Action
Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee <i>12th September 2023</i>	Following consideration of the report, the Healthy Living & Social Care Scrutiny Committee subsequently recommended that the draft Annual Self-Assessment report (consultation version), be noted.	No action required.

Consultee	Comments	Action
<p>Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee 13th September 2023</p>	<p>RECOMMENDED – T H A T the following comments of the Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee be passed to Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider producing a “bite size” version of the report, in order to provide a shorter version for Elected Members and residents. This would build upon and enhance the “easy read” aspect of the document already in place. As part of the introduction to the report, it should clearly outline that it will be addressing those areas and services that the Council said it would do, as well as highlight the Council’s need to prioritise essential services, particularly those for the most vulnerable in the Vale of Glamorgan. It was important to highlight the Council’s achievements, particularly in terms of those areas and services which it had said it would do. Consideration should also be given to include a statement around the Council’s ambitions and aspirations, but this needed to be coupled with the inclusion of a realistic, honest and sober assessment of the current challenges and pressures that the Council faced in providing services, such as the impact caused by the cost of living crisis. 	<p>‘Bite size’ information on the emerging Annual Self-Assessment findings will be circulated this year via the Council’s social media channels. A public summary document will be produced and circulated as part of engagement work for next year’s Annual Self-Assessment informed by feedback from residents and members on how they would like the Council’s performance information reported in future. Over the past year, elected members have played a key role in shaping the Council’s Annual Performance Calendar, particularly in developing the format, content and presentation of key plans, performance reports and the annual self-assessment of performance to enable effective challenge and oversight in line with their roles and responsibilities. We will continue to work through this Member Working Group to develop a format that effectively supports members in their role.</p> <p>The first paragraph of the report states that, <i>‘The Annual Self-Assessment Report evaluates what we have done during the past year within the context of our Annual Delivery Plan 2022/23 and the Corporate Plan 2020-2025 Well-being Objectives and is a fundamental part of our governance framework. Corporate governance is about doing the right things in the right way and demonstrating valid reasons for our actions and decisions.’</i></p> <p>The following will be included to emphasise the focus of the Annual Self-Assessment Report. <i>‘This end of year summary of progress relates to the Council’s Annual Delivery Plan commitments for 2022/23 which have been informed by Vale residents and our key partners ensuring that we have prioritised the services that matter to residents, especially the most vulnerable members of our community.’</i></p> <p>The ‘Our critical challenges’ section sets the context for the key challenges the Council is facing, and these will be developed in some detail in the Annual Delivery Plan 2024/25 which will outline in detail the Council’s ambitions for the coming year. ‘Key challenges’ are identified throughout the Annual Self-Assessment report 2022/23 as aligned to the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives and these also reference our critical challenges as appropriate.</p> <p>No action required.</p>

Consultee	Comments	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was important to encourage Vale of Glamorgan residents to participate and engage in the self-assessment process, and to ensure the Council was a “listening Council” with the emphasis on wanting to hear from residents about the issues and services that mattered to them, as well as where they felt resources should be focussed. As part of this, it was vital for the Council to communicate to the public about the services it provided and what it could and could not do due to the current economic and other pressures that it faced. This would help to ensure that the Council could manage residents’ expectations on the services and other areas of support that they expected the Council to provide. To look to ensuring that the report and the means of engagement with the self-assessment process itself were provided in as many different formats as possible, which would enable greater accessibility and engagement with the residents of the Vale of Glamorgan in this process. 	<p>Consultation on the Self-Assessment findings is a statutory requirement. However, each council must decide an approach that enables it to have an appropriate and representative cross section of key stakeholders views informing the findings. Given poor response rates in previous years to stand alone surveys on our performance, a wider approach to engagement has been adopted (through the Council's Public Participation Strategy) that enables us to use the insights gained throughout the year on our performance alongside standalone corporate public engagement exercises (such as the Let’s Talk about Life in the Vale Public Opinion Survey and the annual budget consultation), social media feedback and community focused engagement to ensure stakeholder views are appropriately reflected in the Council’s Self-Assessment findings.</p> <p>‘Bite size’ information on the emerging Annual Self-Assessment findings will be circulated this year via the Council’s social media channels. A public summary document will be produced and circulated as part of engagement work on next year’s Annual Self-Assessment informed by feedback from Vale citizens on how they would like the Council’s performance reported in future.</p>
<p>Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee 14th September 2023</p>	<p>Following consideration of the report, the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee subsequently recommended that the draft Annual Self-Assessment report (consultation version), be noted.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>
<p>Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee 20th September 2023</p>	<p>Following consideration of the report, the Scrutiny Committee subsequently recommended that the draft Annual Self-Assessment report (consultation version), be noted.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>
<p>Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee 21st September 2023</p>	<p>Following consideration of the draft Annual Self-Assessment report (consultation version) report, the Scrutiny committee RECOMMENDED – T H A T the following comments of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee be passed to Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That further emphasis was given to the reflections and views of residents on Council services within the report. This should provide an open and honest reflection of what had gone well and not so well from residents’ viewpoints and provide the rationale behind the Council’s decisions concerning these, in order to inform Elected Members and residents about why the Council were making 	<p>The ‘Annual Engagement Calendar and Key Insights’ section of the report, includes an overview of social media feedback across council services throughout the year to give greater visibility to the wide range of engagement insights used in informing our judgements.</p> <p>Further enhancements to this section of the report to be actioned in next year’s ASA include:</p>

Consultee	Comments	Action
	<p>the decisions it had on these areas, and the factors involved, as well as the risks of not carrying these out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was important for the Council to communicate to the public about the services it provided and what it could and could not do due to the current economic and other pressures that it faced. To have greater clarity in the report concerning its scope and purpose in that it was reporting on those areas and services that the Council said it would do and had done. <p>Residents and Elected Members should be further encouraged (by the Council and Elected Members) to feedback into this process, i.e.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>an overview of major council decisions that have been made during the year, including outlining the rationale for council decisions, the resulting changes and impact (positive and negative) on residents and communities.</i> <p>Residents/ service users views on council services are also reflected throughout the report as aligned to our four Well-being Objective. Given the breadth of Council services and the varied engagement work being undertaken over the year, we have highlighted some examples across a range of services to give visibility to types of engagement being undertaken and how this is shaping and informing our services and improvements.</p> <p>The first paragraph of the ASA report states that, <i>'The Annual Self-Assessment Report evaluates what we have done during the past year within the context of our Annual Delivery Plan 2022/23 and the Corporate Plan 2020-2025 Well-being Objectives and is a fundamental part of our governance framework. Corporate governance is about doing the right things in the right way and demonstrating valid reasons for our actions and decisions.'</i></p> <p>The following will be included to emphasise the focus of the Annual Self-Assessment Report. <i>'This end of year summary of progress relates to the Council's Annual Delivery Plan commitments for 2022/23 which have been informed by Vale residents and our key partners ensuring that we have prioritised the services that matter to residents, especially the most vulnerable members of our community.'</i></p> <p><i>The 'Our critical challenges' section sets the context for the key challenges the Council is facing, and these will be developed in some detail in the Annual Delivery Plan 2024/25 which will outline the Council's ambitions for the coming year – that is, what it can and cannot do due to economic, financial and other relevant pressures. 'Key challenges' are identified throughout the Annual Self-Assessment report 2022/23 as aligned to the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives and these also reference our critical challenges as appropriate.</i></p> <p>No action required.</p> <p>The 'Annual Engagement Calendar and Key Insights' section of next year's ASA report will incorporate a summary of the areas of emerging concern from elected members informed by the</p>

Consultee	Comments	Action
	<p>through the Let's Talk About Life in the Vale survey and the Vale of Glamorgan Council Champions network.</p>	<p>Member Champions network and views of all members from their role as community representatives.</p>
<p>Governance & Audit Committee 18th September 2023</p>	<p>Governance & Audit Committee recommended that the Draft Vale of Glamorgan Annual Self-Assessment report 202/23 (Appendix A) as the basis for consultation as described in the report be endorsed.</p> <p>Resolved - T H A T the views of the Governance and Audit Committee be referred to Cabinet for its consideration; these being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report was easily accessible given the level and detail of information provided. • For extra context to be added around the use of agency staff and the percentage of overall Council salaries that agency contracts make. Also, to add in some information regarding the Council's policies around the use of staff employed via agencies. • Who were the target audiences as it would be difficult for the ordinary person to engage with the report. 	<p>The Draft Annual Self-Assessment report will be revised to include the following additional information in response to the views and comments of the Governance & Audit Committee.</p> <p>No action required.</p> <p>The Annual Self-assessment Report is a public document written with the Act's key consultees in mind including, our key partners (which include Town and Community Councils), local businesses, Council staff, elected members and Vale citizens. The size of the document reflects the need to evidence progress on the breadth of services and activities undertaken in year by the Council to deliver on its Annual Delivery Plan commitments 2022/23.</p> <p>In response to members feedback, this year we have simplified the structure, content and presentation of the Self-Assessment Report to make it more accessible, including producing an accessible version of the report. There is also a section that includes a summary of our learning from this year's assessment and the areas to strengthen in the next year's assessment.</p> <p>Additionally, we have reflected under each of the 4 Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives, engagement activities undertaken across numerous services throughout the year (including the Council's annual rolling engagement programme) to ensure greater visibility of the wide range of engagement insights used in informing our judgements. There is also a separate section providing key insights on the Annual Engagement Calendar including emerging headline results from</p>

Consultee	Comments	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="456 1157 938 1304">• Consideration be given to the balanced opinions provided in the reports particularly as Council Tax was rising and the level of services was decreasing. <li data-bbox="456 1493 938 1608">• Brexit was mentioned under the 'Critical Challenge' section but there was very little detail about what that meant. 	<p data-bbox="963 180 1560 264">the 'Let's talk about Life in the Vale' Public Opinion Survey and our response to complaints and compliments.</p> <p data-bbox="963 302 1560 846">Consultation on the Self-Assessment findings is a statutory requirement. However, each council must decide an approach that enables it to have an appropriate and representative cross section of key stakeholders views informing the findings. Given poor response rates in previous years to stand alone surveys on our performance, a wider approach to engagement has been adopted (through the Council's Public Participation Strategy) that enables us to use the insights gained throughout the year on our performance alongside standalone corporate public engagement exercises (such as the Let's Talk Public Opinion Survey and the annual budget consultation), social media feedback and community focussed engagement to ensure stakeholder views are appropriately reflected in the Council's Self-Assessment findings.</p> <p data-bbox="963 879 1560 1119">'Bite size' information on the emerging Annual Self-Assessment findings will be circulated this year via the Council's social media channels. A public summary document will be produced and circulated as part of engagement work for next year's Annual Self-Assessment informed by feedback from residents on how they would like the Council's performance reported in future.</p> <p data-bbox="963 1155 1560 1394">The judgements and opinions in the Annual Self-Assessment report relate to our Annual Delivery Plan Commitments for 2022/23. The 2023/24 Annual Self-Assessment report to be produced in 2024 will reflect the continued impact (rising council tax and reduction in services) of the uncertain economic and financial environment on delivery of council services.</p> <p data-bbox="963 1398 1206 1423">No action required.</p> <p data-bbox="963 1459 1560 1730">Brexit was mentioned as one aspect of the ongoing challenges facing local government in what remains a volatile and challenging economic landscape. The focus of this section was on the Council's identified critical challenges which focus on the priorities that matter most to our residents and have informed how we have shaped our services and activities - Cost of Living, Organisational Resilience and Project Zero.</p> <p data-bbox="963 1766 1560 1881">Whilst Brexit continues to present challenges resulting from the end of transition period, these are being closely monitored by the Council and mitigations where appropriate, are in place.</p> <p data-bbox="963 1885 1206 1911">No action required.</p>

Consultee	Comments	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="456 212 937 422">• Was more balanced commentary needed around Project Zero given that at its previous meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee, the Committee had asked for that Risk to be attributed a catastrophic status. <li data-bbox="456 642 937 758">• It was important to highlight the risks associated with Project Zero as the Council had committed to become carbon neutral by 2030. <li data-bbox="456 1682 937 1850">• The report mentioned that the Council had introduced new technology to facilitate hybrid Council and Committee meetings, but given recent progress was that a true reflection. 	<p data-bbox="963 212 1560 569">Good progress was made in achieving our 2022/23 commitments contributing to Project Zero with around 84% of associated Service Plan actions being delivered in year. However, the report also acknowledges the significant financial challenges we are facing in meeting our net zero commitments given ongoing financial pressures and the well-known challenges with decarbonising the supply chain. Given the recent escalation in the risk this poses to the Council, the Project Zero board is due to review the effectiveness of existing risk controls. No action required.</p> <p data-bbox="963 642 1560 968">The challenges associated with project Zero are referenced under WBO4 – ‘Delivering our commitments to achieve net zero by 2030 will present significant challenges in the short to long-term due to ongoing financial pressures and the challenge associated with decarbonising the supply chain.’ The following specific risks associated with Project Zero will be referenced in the critical challenges section of the Annual Self-Assessment Report to emphasize the significance and need for action.</p> <p data-bbox="963 999 1560 1608"><i>While the Council is making progress in aligning its budget spending with its Project Zero commitments, the current short term national funding approaches mean that there is no sustainable long-term financial strategy in place to support the Council and its partners in delivering the Project Zero commitments. The ongoing cost-of-living crisis, economic and financial uncertainties continue to place significant pressure on our ability to deliver core local authority services, distracting focus and reducing our ability to invest in the net zero agenda. This includes our capacity to engage with our communities to support the delivery of Project Zero commitments. The Council and its partners lack the capacity, expertise and skills required to deliver the Project Zero commitments. In addition, there is a lack of timely and comprehensive carbon data insights to inform our decisions for the long term in relation to delivery of Project Zero.</i></p> <p data-bbox="963 1671 1560 1934">Whilst the move to a fully integrated hybrid meeting platform has presented challenges, significant work has been undertaken with a new provider to ensure successful installation with training ongoing for Officers alongside a programme of testing the platform at internal Officers’ Meetings; this will be followed by training for all Members prior to the platform being used for public facing meetings of the Council which is anticipated next month.</p>

Consultee	Comments	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was reference to absence days increasing, so more context behind that was required as well as data to show as a comparison to other Local Authorities. With regard to areas that had missed targets for consideration to be given as to how these were presented and to also include further commentary under the regulatory improvements section. 	<p>The following will be included in 'areas where further work is required' in relation to last year's areas of focus to reflect that this work remains ongoing.</p> <p><i>Embed our use of the integrated hybrid meeting technology to improve participation in local democracy in line with our public participation priorities.</i></p> <p>Sickness absence benchmarking data for 2022/23 is currently not available. Benchmarking data overall has been limited since the removal of data reporting obligations by Welsh Government during the pandemic. Out of 12 Welsh LAs, where data has been provided, the Vale ranked joint 8th with worst performing reporting a figure of 15.45 days lost to sickness absence per full time employee and best performing 9.2 days.</p> <p>There was a general increase in absence, especially coming out of the pandemic, we also saw increases in long term absence for work related stress and increases in absence for operations/recovery. The operations/recovery could be staff awaiting operations and with the backlog in operations in the NHS, this is impacting staff coming back to work.</p> <p>Performance exceptions in relation to the Annual Delivery Plan commitments for 2022/23 have been reported to members in July 2023 as part of Q4/ End of Year Annual Delivery Plan Performance reporting. Similarly, detailed progress with our regulatory actions are reported quarterly to all Scrutiny Committees as part of the same quarterly performance monitoring arrangements, with Governance & Audit Committee and Cabinet having oversight in line with their remits. Governance & Audit Committee will receive the End of Year progress update on our Regulatory actions in October 2023.</p>

Public Services Board (PSB)

Consultee	Comments	Action
The Public Services Board was presented with the emerging findings from the ASA for their views during September 2023.	No additional comments or views received following discussion at a meeting of the PSB Board in September. A partner asked why 'Cost of Living' was not featured as an area of focus in the ASA findings.	Cost of living remains a critical council challenge which features through many of the emerging areas for future focus identified in the ASA findings. No action required.

Trade Unions

Consultee	Comments	Action
The Joint Consultative Forum (JCF) was presented with the emerging findings from the ASA for their views during September 2023.	No formal recommendations or comments made by the JCF.	No action required

Town and Community Councils

Consultee	Comments	Action
Penarth Town Council	<p>Penarth Town Council Members noted that whilst they were asked for feedback on the Draft Self-Assessment Document, there was, disappointingly, very little mention of the Town and Community Council sector within it.</p> <p>Members felt that this document was an opportunity to show the various structures and agreements in place between the sector and its parent authority, such as the Charter that has existed between the two since November 2019.</p> <p>There is a lot of positive work undertaken in partnership between the sector, including but not limited to the use of Service Level Agreements and collaborative efforts concerning Place Planning, which Members felt this document would benefit from including and discussing.</p> <p>Members noted their appreciation for the different current pressures within the Town and Community Council Sector and those at the Parent Authority Level; with similar pressures potentially faced by both, including information about collaborative efforts and partnerships within established Vale of Glamorgan and Town Council structures would not only showcase them but provide examples for how others could look to work together accordingly, no matter the scale of their operations.</p>	<p>The Annual Self-Assessment report highlights throughout the report how working collaboratively and in partnership has contributed to the Council's key successes of the past year as aligned to our Well-being Objectives - with Town and Community Council's playing a significant part in these successes. However, we acknowledge that the report does not single out and detail examples of the positive relationships and contributions of the Town and Community sector. To address this, we will include a summary in next year's Annual Self-Assessment report highlighting the key successes achieved in the past year through partnerships and collaborative working including work with The Third Sector and Town and Community Councils to give greater visibility to how these have contributed to delivering our Annual Delivery Plan commitments and the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives.</p> <p>Strengthening Communities, one of the themes in the Council's revised transformation programme, sets out the importance of working with Town and Community councils and the Third Sector generally to transform how we operate to enable us to achieve our Well-being Objectives.</p> <p>In line with our commitment to strengthening communities, we are building on the positive work undertaken with Town and Community Councils and the Third Sector around poverty to further shape and enhance our work in this area. Alongside this, we are also looking for further opportunities to maximise the benefits of working together and have started having conversations around how best to work together to build the capacity, skills and the resources required to support our communities to become more self-reliant, informed by Audit Wales's national reviews on Community resilience, Social enterprises, and</p>

Consultee	Comments	Action
	<p>Members also felt that it was important that all those within the Town and Community Council Sector that wished to work in partnership with the Vale of Glamorgan Council had the opportunity to.</p>	<p>the Third Sector. Over the coming year, we will be building on these conversations alongside the review of the Compact, to help shape our approach.</p>
<p>Penllyn Council</p> <p>Community</p>	<p>Penllyn Community Council members noted that a lot of effort was put into the report.</p> <p>We saw that service users were often very happy using the VoG services. We felt that some of the figures and percentages quoted in the various survey results were somewhat not quantifiable. For example, it is often not clear what the overall number of users of a particular service was. It often only states the number of service users who took part in a survey.</p> <p>You are specifically requesting feedback of the town and community councils in the VoG. The word community council however is mentioned only once , that is on page 41 (forgive me, if I am wrong). We feel that there is a disconnect between the democratic institution at local level, i.e. the community council and the VoG council and administration. This includes a disconnect from our three local VoG councillors and the various VoG departments. We often deal with local issues that need input from the VoG. But to actually get through to administrators and obtain advice and activate remedial action is a task that even our extremely well connected Clerk is struggling to achieve.</p> <p>We feel that there is lots of local expertise that is not utilised and would like to see that situation reversed.</p>	<p>Residents/ service users views across a range of council services have been reflected throughout the report as aligned to our four Well-being Objective to give visibility to the types of engagement being undertaken and how this is shaping and informing our services and improvements. Given the breadth of Council services and the varied engagement work being undertaken over the year, we have highlighted some examples throughout the report, reflecting both small and wider population groups that are accessing our services. <i>We will give further consideration to how we present our engagement findings in next year's self-assessment report to ensure the information is clear, quantifiable and more easily accessible.</i></p> <p>The Annual Self-Assessment report highlights throughout the report how working collaboratively and in partnership has contributed to the Council's key successes of the past year as aligned to our Well-being Objectives - with Town and Community Council's playing a significant part in these successes. However, we acknowledge that the report does not single out and detail examples of the positive relationships and contributions of the Town and Community sector. To address this, we will include a summary in next year's Annual Self-Assessment report highlighting the key successes achieved in the past year through partnerships and collaborative working including work with The Third Sector and Town and Community Councils to give greater visibility to how these have contributed to achieving our Annual Delivery Plan commitments and the Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives.</p> <p>Strengthening Communities, one of the themes in the Council's revised transformation programme, sets out the importance of working with Town and Community councils and the Third Sector generally to transform how we operate to enable us to achieve our Well-being Objectives.</p> <p>In line with our commitment to strengthening communities, we are building on the positive work undertaken with Town and Community Councils and the Third Sector around poverty to further shape and enhance our work in this area. Alongside this, we are also looking for further opportunities to maximise the benefits of working</p>

Consultee	Comments	Action
		together and have started having conversations around how best to work together to build the capacity, skills and the resources required to support our communities to become more self-reliant, informed by Audit Wales's national reviews on Community resilience, Social enterprises, and the Third Sector. Over the coming year, we will be building on these conversations alongside the review of the Compact, to help shape our approach.

Vale Businesses

Consultee	Comments	Action
Emerging findings were circulated to all registered local businesses for their views during September 2023.	No comments received to date following circulation of emerging ASA findings to all Vale businesses.	No action required

As reflected in our self-assessment findings, effective public engagement remains an area of continued focus for the Council. In response to the emerging insights, we have further strengthened the areas of future focus within our self-assessment and reviewed and revised our overall engagement score from 'Good' to 'Fair' to reflect the improvements required in this area. We will continue to improve how we communicate our financial and other challenges, involve and listen to residents and ensure that we are providing clear and simple explanations of how decisions have been taken and the impact they will have on our citizens.