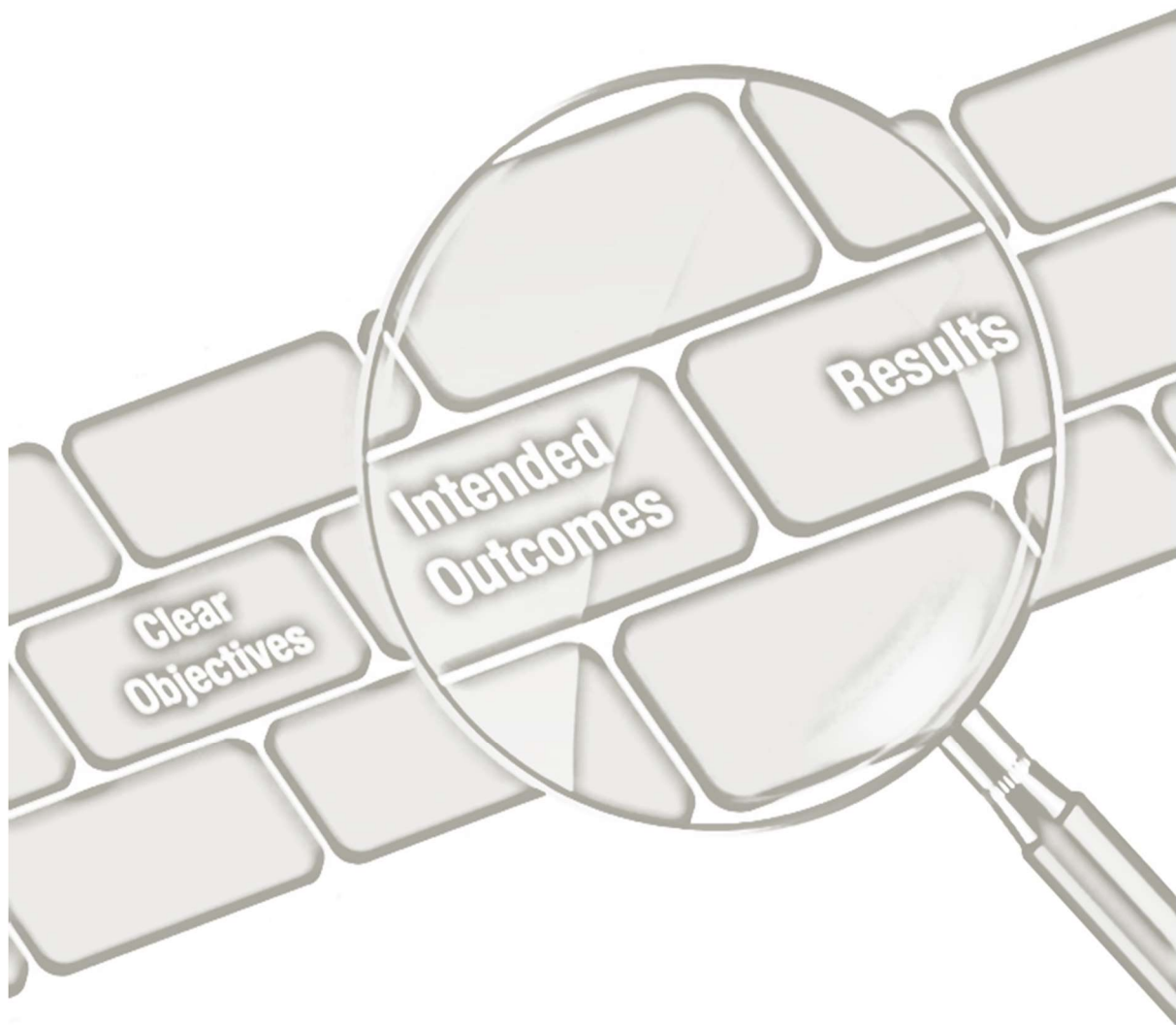


# Annual Review of Performance

## 2019/20





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## Introduction - The Annual Review of Performance 2019/20

The Council's Corporate Plan 2018/22 *Delivering a Successful and Sustainable Swansea* describes the council's vision for Swansea, our 5 key priorities (Well-being Objectives and Improvement Objectives) and our organisation values and principles that will underpin the delivery of our priorities and overall strategy.

This discharges our duties under the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and Local Government Measure (Wales) 2009 to set Well-being Objectives and Improvement Objectives.

Our Well-being Objectives show the Council's contribution to Wales' 7 national goals<sup>1</sup> described within the Well-Being of Future Generations Act (the 'Act') and describes how we will maximise this contribution to the national goals and to the social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being of Swansea by working in line with the sustainability principles set out within the Act.

The Corporate Plan sets out the steps being undertaken to meet our Well-being Objectives and contribute to the seven national well-being goals outlined in the Act.

The Plan also sets out how we are maximising our contribution to our well-being objectives and national goals through the way in which we work, which is in line with sustainable principles as follows:

- Looking ahead to the medium and long-term challenges.
- Preventing problems from occurring or from getting worse.
- Ensuring our objectives do not contradict each other and compliment those of other public bodies.
- Working in partnership with others.
- Involving local people.

### Our ambitions and commitments to residents – our Well-being Objectives 2018/22

In order to meet these challenges, we prioritised six Well-being Objectives in 2018/22. These were:

- ***Safeguarding people from harm*** – so that our citizens are free from harm and exploitation.
- ***Improving Education & Skills*** – so that every child and young person in Swansea gains the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in life.
- ***Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure*** – so that Swansea has a thriving mixed use City Centre and a local economy that will support the prosperity of our citizens.
- ***Tackling Poverty*** – so that every person in Swansea can achieve his or her potential.
- ***Transformation & Future Council development*** – so that we and the services that we provide are sustainable and fit for the future.
- ***Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's natural resources and biodiversity*** - so that we maintain and enhance biodiversity, reduce our carbon footprint, improve our knowledge and understanding of our natural environment and benefit health and well-being.

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<sup>1</sup> The National Goals are: A Prosperous Wales; A Resilient Wales; A Healthier Wales; A More Equal Wales; A Wales of More Cohesive Communities; A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language; A Globally Responsible Wales.



This Annual Review of Performance 2019/20 (the 'Review') is the Council's report on its progress undertaking the steps to meet its Well-being Objectives as outlined in the Corporate Plan. In doing so, the Review seeks to describe how the Council has worked in line with the sustainable development principles in order to maximise its contribution to the national goals.

## **Section 6 Biodiversity Duty**

The information detailed under the *Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's Natural Resources and Biodiversity* Objective in this report will be used as the basis for the Council's Section 6 Biodiversity Duty Report to Welsh Government.

### **How can you get involved?**

You can get involved and have your say. <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/haveyoursay>. You can also get involved through the Council's Scrutiny Boards and panels, which are open to the public: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny>. You can contact the Council at any time by: Email to [improvement@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:improvement@swansea.gov.uk) Telephone 01792 637570.

## **Part 1 – Reports on progress in 2019/20 undertaking the steps to meet the Council's Well-being Objectives**

This part of the Review represents a report on the progress the Council has made undertaking the steps it set out in its Corporate Plan 2018/22 to work towards meeting each Well-being Objective.

For each Well-being Objective, the Review sets out the following headings:

1. Why this is a Well-being Objective.
2. The steps we said that we would take to meet this Well-being Objective.
3. What success will look like.
4. Making progress towards the steps to meet this Well-being Objective – what worked.
5. How this Well-being Objective is contributing to the achievement of the national well-being goals.
6. Lessons learnt and areas for development.

Part 1 also contains case-studies to better show the impact the steps are having. Overall, the reports show that the Council has made progress undertaking the steps to meet its Well-being Objectives whilst areas for development and lessons learnt are set out at the end of each report.



## **Safeguarding people from harm**

### **1. Why this is a Well-being Objective**

- We are committed to ensuring that citizens live their lives free from harm and exploitation.
- Safeguarding vulnerable people needs to be seen as everybody's business within every service within the Council, by all elected Members and by those who do work on behalf of the Council.
- We want children to be safe from harm and to stay with their families or be supported in family settings where it is safe for them to do so.
- We want to ensure all vulnerable adults are safeguarded from harm and able to live to their maximum potential.
- We want to tackle domestic abuse and ensure that victims are fully supported.
- We want people to age well and be able to live as independently and as safely as possible in their own homes.

### **2. The steps we said that we would take to meet this Well-being Objective.**

- Implement the new Corporate Safeguarding Policy to ensure that safeguarding 'is everyone's business'.
- Continue to improve understanding and awareness of safeguarding and how to identify and report concerns amongst Council staff, elected Members, partners, the public and those working on behalf of the Council.
- Continue to ensure that Adult and Child & Family Services are robust and effective in meeting the statutory requirements laid on the Authority as set out in the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014 to improve well-being outcomes for children and vulnerable adults in Swansea.
- Update and refresh the Safe Looked After Children (LAC) Reduction Strategy to manage demand and support more intensive work with children with eligible needs and reduce the numbers of children needing to become LAC.
- Continue to implement the Corporate Parenting Strategy to improve outcomes for looked after children and care leavers.
- Understand the implications for Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) for citizens and explore further improvements that the Council could make.
- Continue to involve looked after children in getting their voice heard about the services that they receive through engagement with children and young people and through strengths based practice that focusses on their strengths and assets and what they and their families can do to help themselves.
- Continue to ensure that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place to protect those at risk from significant harm and exploitation.
- Continue to strengthen collaboration and partnerships on safeguarding through the Western Bay Adult and Children's Safeguarding Boards.
- Work with partners to raise awareness around domestic abuse and put in place effective and timely interventions and support.
- Work with partners to address safeguarding in its wider sense; for example, hate crime, modern slavery and bullying in schools.
- Maintain a framework for the delivery of the Prevent interventions programme in conjunction with partners to support vulnerable individuals who may be at risk of or being drawn into violent and / or non-violent extremism.
- Ensure the adoption, delivery and effective monitoring of the Council's Prevention Strategy to manage need and improve well-being.



- Provide people with equal access to services and continue to maximise peoples' independence and the ability to live in their own homes for longer and improve quality of life.
- Work with partners to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people and to provide information, advice and assistance to all, including carers and young carers.
- Work with partners through the Ageing Well Strategy to help people to stay healthy and age well.
- Develop Swansea's status as the first Dementia Friendly City in Wales.
- Work with the Older People's Commissioner for Wales to establish a Charter for Older People to ensure the voices of older people are heard.

### **3. What success will look like.**

Citizens live their lives free from harm and exploitation. There are effective and robust arrangements ensure the safeguarding the most vulnerable people is seen as everybody's business. Children are supported to be safe from harm, and, where possible within supportive families close to home. All vulnerable adults are safeguarded from harm and able to live to their maximum potential. Tackling and preventing domestic abuse whilst ensuring that victims are fully supported. People are supported to age well and be able to live as independently and as safely as possible in their own homes.

### **4. Progress taking steps to meet this Well-being Objective – what worked.**

Safeguarding 'is everyone's business'.

- Safeguarding vulnerable people is Swansea's number one priority. Across the Council, Safeguarding is see as 'everyone's business', and our entire workforce has a duty to report any concerns they may come across affecting vulnerable adults or children.
- Swansea's Corporate Safeguarding policy and approach addresses a wider range of issues of potential safety concerns, which are present in our communities. Such concerns include domestic violence, financial abuse, street homelessness, bullying in schools, hate crimes, child sexual exploitation, modern slavery, County Lines, and radicalisation.
- Applying the updated Corporate Safeguarding Policy, we can ensure that the Council continues to strengthen all areas of safeguarding with a new work programme, which is overseen by the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group jointly chaired by the Director of Social Services and Cabinet Member:
  - Safe Governance –having clear management and corporate ownership of safeguarding matters, including scrutiny
  - Safe Employment - make safer recruitment decisions and getting the right staff working with vulnerable people
  - Safe Workforce- all staff are trained, supported, and fully aware of safeguarding responsibilities and duty to report
  - Safe Practice- we have robust arrangements in place to report, investigate and follow up any safeguarding concerns
  - Safe Partnerships- how we work with partners to promote safeguarding and in tackling the many complex issues
  - Safe Voice- the vulnerable person or child who needs to feel safe has strong voice in what needs to happen



- Safe Performance – how we know whether we are being effective and continue to learn as an organisation
- Swansea Council work closely with partners such as Health and the Police to ensure that the most vulnerable children and adults in our communities are safe and protected from harm, abuse and neglect. Swansea Council is constantly taking steps to tackle known concerns as well as proactively dealing with new and emerging issues.
- Swansea Council demonstrated vital leadership during the COVID-19 crisis that emerged at the latter end of 2019/20 through #HereForSwansea and within the regional Community Silver Command partnership response. The Council quickly established a Community Response Call Centre Hub set up especially for those shielding themselves from the virus and has been providing support to more than 1,000 callers' daily seeking support.

#### Understanding and awareness of safeguarding

- Audit Wales carried out a follow up-review of Swansea's corporate safeguarding children arrangements in November 2019 (Reported in Feb 2020): <https://www.audit.wales/node/5873>
- The review found that the Council had addressed most of the recommendations in previous national and local safeguarding reports but should strengthen some aspects of its corporate safeguarding arrangements.
- All Council staff and elected members receive safeguarding training and there are representative safeguarding leads from all service areas. These leads attend the Corporate Safeguarding group jointly chaired by the Director of Social Services and Cabinet Member to drive improvements through work programme outlined above.

#### **Case Study: Parents' events to highlight safeguarding issues**

**Parents and guardians at two comprehensive in Swansea along with those from their feeder primary schools were invited to events to learn more about some of the concerns children and young people face when out in their communities and the steps that can be taken to help to make them safe.** The West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board organised the two pilot events as part of National Safeguarding Week. The first event took place at Cefn Hengoed Comprehensive and the second is at Penyrheol Comprehensive the following day. The pilot scheme gives parents a chance to find out about current national and local safeguarding issues including 'County Lines'. This is the term used when drug gangs from larger cities expand their operations to smaller towns and villages, often using violence to drive out local dealers and exploiting children and vulnerable people to sell or transport drugs. A number of different agencies were present at both events including South Wales Police and Swansea Council's education, housing and children's services. There was a chance to visit various information stalls and there was a presentation on the current safeguarding issues facing communities delivered jointly by the police and children's services.

Mark Child, Swansea Council's Cabinet Lead on Safeguarding, said: "The safeguarding of all vulnerable people in Swansea, young and old, is the council's number one priority. The aim of these two events is to arm parents with the information they need to understand the dangers and risks to young people, the signs to look out for, what to do if they have concerns and the help that is available." National Safeguarding Week ran between Monday November 11 and 15th. The aim was to raise awareness about safeguarding issues and to reinforce the message that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. More than 40 events took place at venues across the West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board area.



## Services to Children, Families and Vulnerable Adults - meeting statutory requirements

- Swansea Council embraces the key principles of the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 in focusing on the well-being of our most vulnerable people. By promoting strengths of people to achieve their own outcomes and working collaboratively within supportive communities.
- Swansea through the Adult Services Improvement programme is remodelling the care and support available to vulnerable adults to help them remain in their own homes, with their carers and the services available to assist their recovery following an admission to hospital or illness.
- Child and Family Services also has an extensive improvement programme, which places the vulnerable child at the centre of everything we do to protect them from harm and to improve their wellbeing and to extend the range of specialist help available to the child's family or carers. Our leadership and workforce is constantly looking at new and creative ways to ensure the views and wishes of each child we work with are heard and acted upon.

## Working with Children and Families

- Child and Family Services have been working closely with partners on a 'Getting It right for Every Child' programme, establishing Early Help Hubs, a new Edge of Care Service and more integrated front door arrangements involving a range of professionals.
- We have been working hard on a Safe Looked After Children (LAC) reduction strategy and to stabilise the number of children and young people who need to enter local authority care. Once permanence has been achieved, through the child living with a safe and supportive family, their status is reviewed with their voice being heard.
- Child and Family Integrated Information, Advice and Assistance Service were available throughout the COVID-19 crisis to discuss with families, public or other professionals any concerns involving significant risk of harm or risk to life to a child or young person.

## Corporate Parenting

- Swansea Council's Corporate Parenting responsibilities are vital in ensuring that each and every child looked after has a voice in their care and support; also that there are given the best chance in life to achieve their full potential and maintain their wellbeing.
- Work to re-design the priorities within the Corporate Parenting Strategy is continuing, as is the work to ensure that the membership of the Corporate Parenting Board are the right people to take forward the new strategy.

## Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

- Swansea Council has realigned and improved the accessibility of services aimed at tackling child poverty, prevention, welfare support and lifelong learning. The aim is to help build communities and promote employment opportunities all helping to mitigate the Impact of ACE's.



## Voice and Rights of the Child

- The Council adopted the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 2014. This means the Council must perform its functions in a manner which is consistent with the interests of local children. Children and young people must be provided with meaningful opportunities to influence decisions concerning their lives (Article 12).
- Swansea has a Participation and Co-production Strategy for Vulnerable Children and Young People (2018 – 2021). This Strategy describes how Child and Family Services will support the UNCRC and Article 12. 2019/20 was a busy year for the Participation Team in its first year implementing the new approach to care experienced participation in Children's Services. As well as a Big Conversation event held in December 2019, other activities included giving Care Experienced Young People a voice in recruitment across the service and the start of rebranding the Looked After Children Team via the medium of art.
- In addition to workshops enabling children and young people to have their say on the information and services they receive, participation work is being supported by the People Policy Development Committee by looking at how we can better support Transition to Adulthood; further work will be undertaken regionally.
- We are continuing to develop our Bays + service to help prevent and deal with youth homelessness, including the Infonation youth information service and support to care leavers. Swansea has also commissioned a Parent-Carers forum to shape our future plans in support of children with disabilities and through transition, which was launched in September 2019.

### Case Study: BBC One Show broadcaster launched Swansea forum for families of disabled children

**Award-winning broadcaster Carrie Grant was the guest speaker at the launch of a new peer led forum in Swansea that will give parents and carers of children with disabilities and additional needs a greater voice in the way services in the city are run.** The BBC One Show reporter, who is herself a parent carer of four children, all with additional needs, was at the event at the Grand Theatre. The Swansea Parent Carer Forum has been created co-productively with Swansea Council to make sure that the views of all parent carers are represented and taken into account. The forum will work collaboratively in equal partnership with the council and others on developing and improving services in Swansea. Heidi Lythgoe, the Chairperson of Swansea PCF, said "We are truly excited to share the forum's vision, purpose and aims and grow our membership. We believe passionately that working co-productively with Swansea Council and other service providers will put the voice of disabled children of all ages and their families at the centre of decisions and deliver services that work for our community. Our launch is an important part of connecting with the wider parent carer community and ensuring we represent our diverse community."

Elliot King, Swansea Council's Cabinet Member for Children's Services, said: "As a council we've got a strong commitment to ensuring that services like education and social services are meeting the needs of the people who use them. The new forum will bring parent-carers together so they can help shape and influence our efforts to update and improve the services we provide for them. It will be vital in representing the voices of all parent carers of disabled children."

## Working with Vulnerable Adults

- Swansea continues to focus our wellbeing services on prevention, early intervention, reablement and promoting independence.



- The Common Access Point (CAP) for Health and Social Care was available throughout the recent COVID-19 crisis to ensure that vulnerable adults and their carers were able to access to the right support at the right time by the right person.
- Through a Collaborative Communication framework, Adult Services are changing the conversation that we have with people about what matters to them in having a good life and to help achieve their personal wellbeing outcomes.

#### Maximising people's right to independence

- Working with colleagues across Swansea Bay University Health Board and Neath Port Talbot Council on the *Hospital 2 Home* programme, we've developed a shared model of delivery with the prime purpose of assessing, caring and rehabilitating more people at home.
- There has been extensive work to remodel our internal and external domiciliary care services to provide specialist and flexible response to meet increasingly more complex needs of people supported to remain in their own home in all areas of Swansea. Ty Cila and Alexandra Road have been remodelled to provide respite services (Pre-COVID).

#### **Case Study: New contracts to boost domiciliary care across city**

**Improvements to the care and support provided to some people in Swansea in their own homes were phased in.** The changes should help to increase the support available so more people can remain in their own homes and communities as they grow older. Swansea Council has been looking at ways it can strengthen domiciliary care to ensure that there are enough providers to cover homes in all areas of the city and that in the future the system has enough capacity to cope with increased demand due to an aging population. Following extensive consultation with service users and partner organisations to establish what is working well and what can be improved, the council re-tendered contracts. New contracts were to be awarded on a closer geographical basis aimed at cutting the distances carers travel between clients and ensuring rural areas are as well covered as those in the city. Plans were put in place to ensure that there is a smooth transition for those people who will switch providers to ensure that their needs continue to be met and indeed the care they receive is improved. Swansea Council had been aware for some time that the rates it pays for domiciliary care were low and these changes would also help address this. Cabinet Member for Care, Health & Ageing Well, Mark Child, said: "We know how valued our domiciliary care service and how it helps many people to live independently in their own homes. As a public body, by law we have to go out to tender on these contracts at regular intervals, but we have also used this as an opportunity to look at the services we provide and improvements that can be made. It is no secret that Social Services budgets are under pressure but this is not about saving money - in fact we expect the changes we are making to cost more. As they grow older, more and more people want to remain in their own homes and we are want to make sure that we strengthen the service to ensure there are enough providers with enough well-trained staff to help them to do so."

#### Collaboration and partnership

- Swansea Council is a key partner within the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership, which is driving transformational improvements in wellbeing, health and care for local populations by collaborating on better practice, better services, better technologies and better use of resources. The partnership consist of 3 Transformation Boards, each leading on an ambitious programme of improvements for the region:



- Children and Young People Transformation Board
- Adults Transformation Board
- Integration Transformation Board
- On the 1st April 2019, the footprint of the Safeguarding Boards changed due to the departure of Bridgend and the West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board was formed, covering both the West Glamorgan Safeguarding Children and Adult Boards. New national safeguarding procedures have been launched alongside this during 2019/20.

#### Domestic Abuse

- Swansea has taken a regional approach in working with partners to raising awareness about Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) and to commissioning timely responses. There have been many local examples of work undertaken, including:
  - Home Office #YouAreNotAlone campaign, which was promoted by Swansea's Child & Family services producing a video.
  - A further social media video was created with a message of support and encouragement to access services, which reached over 22k views on the council's Facebook page.
  - Swansea became the first in Wales to launch the Domestic Abuse Chatbot in collaboration with Microsoft, which allows citizens to access information and advice on local services, safety planning and information on VAWDASV in an anonymous and discreet way.
  - Swansea's Community Safety Team worked with local supermarkets and shops to get #MakeYourselfHeard posters visible providing information on the silent 999 calls. Large scale posters with this messaging are also on display across the city on trailers.
- Since the COVID-19 outbreak, extensive work has been undertaken to ensure that people affected by VAWDASV are aware that services are still available.

#### Case Study: Football legend Lee backs White Ribbon Day event

**SWANSEA football legend Lee Trundle supported an event to showcase work taking place in the city to tackle male violence against women.** To coincide with White Ribbon Day, Lee joined representatives from a range of agencies at The Grand Theatre. The event, organised by Swansea Council, was open to the public and professionals and also highlighted the need to prevent abuse occurring. The White Ribbon symbolises hope across the world for women and children living in fear of domestic violence and abuse. Among the organisations invited were Swansea Women's Aid, South Wales Police, Swansea Bay University Health Board, Calan DVS, BAWSO, Hafan Cymru and Thrive Women's Aid.

#### Safeguarding in context

- Some of the major risks faced by children and young people today are outside the family circle. In January 2020, the University Of Bedfordshire completed a systems review of how Swansea identifies, responds and protects children and young people who are at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation and County Lines. Their feedback was generally positive and highlighted that we are already working to identify peer and non-familial networks, which could place a vulnerable child at risk of harm, though there is still room for better recording and coordination of information.



## Hate Crime

- Swansea Council works closely with the police and other partners to ensure victims can receive support and to receive Hate Crime referrals. The Council is taking steps to raise awareness of Hate Crime by informing the public of what support is in place, how to report incidents or concerns and events held during Hate Crime Awareness week.
- We continued in 2019/20 to raise awareness of Hate Crime through the Hate Crime Awareness in October at Swansea's Waterfront Museum. The event was part of a National Hate Crime Awareness Week event 2019. The theme was 'Spread Love, Not Hate' to reflect upon in the context of imminent EU withdrawal and the increasingly divisive political and media discourse which surrounds it. The event featured information stands, exhibitions and workshops. The event included workshops on Gendered Islamophobia, definitions of Hate Crime, reporting Hate Crime and how to cope with the effects of Hate Crime.

## Radicalisation (PREVENT Strategy)

- Our PREVENT strategy and interventions programme is aimed at to support vulnerable individuals who may be at risk of radicalisation or being drawn into extremism. This is managed through a multi-agency (Channel) partnership, comprising primarily of organisations that have a legislative duty under the Counter Terrorism Act 2015. The Council has a statutory duty to provide leadership and direction to this work to ensure that we can respond to concerns and put in place mentoring and safeguarding plans to support and steer individuals from extremism. Swansea are also part of a Home Office pilot called Dovetail, which transfers responsibilities for some elements of Channel from the police to local government, sitting more closely with local authorities' wider safeguarding responsibilities.

## Prevention & Wellbeing

- Swansea Council replaced the People Directorate with a Social Services Directorate to achieve a new, wider service offer to the most vulnerable people in our communities. This change is supporting a realignment of our poverty, prevention and wellbeing services aimed at ensuring positive outcomes for people.
- Our Neighbourhood Approach has brought together for key support roles and community based teams including Local Area Co-ordination and Neighbourhood Development Officers via SCVS. This forms part of an assets-based approach that places emphasis on building community assets needed to meet local needs as they emerge.

### **Case Study: Artist is brightening the lives of others after support from Local Area Coordination**

#### **An artist from Swansea is using his talents to brighten the lives of others after being helped to regain his own confidence and to explore his home city.**

Gary Crosby became isolated and felt he lacked purpose following an incident in which his back was badly injured and which left him using a wheelchair. He was introduced to Swansea Council's Local Area Coordination Scheme and he says the experience has been life-changing. Recently some of his work has gone on show at Morriston Hospital while other pieces have been displayed at exhibitions and galleries. He has also formed a close relationship with The Veterans Club and helps raise money to support members of the Armed Services and their families.



Local Area Coordinators (LACs) have a wide-ranging preventative brief that includes looking out for people who might be lonely and isolated and help them to connect with others so that they can live stronger, healthier and more independent and active lives.

Gary has been working with Dan Garnell, who covers central Swansea.

Dan said: "Gary is a very proud artist and produces work of an amazing standard but when we talked it was apparent he felt isolated from others and, being a wheelchair user, he found it hard to access groups where he could go to pursue his passion."

Together they discovered various options and Gary went out and got himself a bus pass that gave him and his wife Sue the freedom to get out of their home and explore their surroundings.

Gary also met up with the Veterans Club and created a piece to mark the centenary of the end of World War One.

This relationship has developed further and he now donates some of his work for them to sell on.

Gary said: "My involvement with Dan and the Local Area Coordination Scheme has opened up opportunities for me that I would not have had otherwise and it has literally changed my life in a very positive way. I've have found a purpose for my art which makes me look forward to the day and has boosted my confidence. It also makes me proud to know I am helping other people through doing something that helps me."

Swansea Council's Cabinet Member for Care, Health & Ageing Well, Cllr Mark Child, said: "Gary's artwork is fantastic and I'm sure it will be appreciated by patients, staff and visitors at Morriston. His story is just another example of the excellent work our LACs do in Swansea. There are now LACs working in communities across our city walking besides people of all ages, helping them to discover a good life, become confident and stronger, developing their own strengths and helping them to avoid the need for them to resort to health and social services."

#### Equal Access to services

- Swansea Council supports many vulnerable people and families through its supporting people and supported living programmes, which each provides a range of valuable and necessary housing-related services. This includes care and support to help people to live independently and maintain their tenancies, including people at risk or experiencing homelessness.

#### Carers and young carers

- We recognise the vital role carers have in the care and support of their loved ones and Swansea aims to deliver a high quality range of care and support for both the cared for person in need and their carers and young carers.
- Building on the successful approaches and services locally, we have been working on a regional carers strategy to ensure our approaches are more sustainable in the future.
- Swansea has already taken steps to improve how we identify carers and young carers and then how we support them to access support services to improve their own well-being. The next steps will be to further develop our service offer to carers locally, particularly to those people caring for people with dementia who may require nursing care.
- Swansea Young Carers Service based now within the YMCA for carers aged 8-18 supported 75 Young Carers and completed 31 Young Carers Assessments.



## Ageing Well

- Swansea's Public Services Board are working in partnership in taking forward our Wellbeing strategy and we have reviewed the Live Well Age Well objectives and agreed on three themes: A City For All, Health Literacy and Active Travel.
- A Life Stages Team has worked with a variety of residents and community groups, engaging through the newly formed Live Well, Age Well Forums to plan our next steps; these include: a Health & Well-being Forum (held May 2019), Transport & Getting About Forum (July 2019), Staying Safe Forum (September 2019) and an Employment & Money Matters Forum (February 2020).

## Dementia Friendly City

- The Dementia Friendly Generations project, funded by the Integrated Care Fund (ICF), had the vision to develop a "Dementia Friendly Generation" and raise awareness of dementia across Swansea. An Officer worked in partnership with the Alzheimer's Society to develop this project. The "Dementia Friendly Generations" project is impacting in two areas:
- The Dementia Friendly Schools project worked with 4 primary schools (Gendros, Bishopston, Sketty, St Joseph's), 2 secondary schools (Pontarddulais & Pentrehafod) 110 pupils and 30 residents/service users from "The Hollies" and "St John's Day Service" have been engaged. Five Dementia Champions have been trained and have provided Dementia Information Sessions to teaching staff, pupils, care home/service staff and residents/service users.

### Case Study: Comprehensive is city's first Dementia Friendly School

**A comprehensive in Swansea became the first in the city to be officially recognised as a Dementia Friendly School.** Pupils at Pontarddulais Comprehensive and their teachers were presented with the award by the Alzheimer's Society. Awareness sessions and whole school assemblies helped everyone at the school to understand more about dementia. And a group of pupils had been visiting older people at Swansea Council's Hollies Care Home in an initiative that proved hugely beneficial to all. They took part in a digital story telling project where the young people joined the residents in exploring issues around being young and old so they could learn from each other by telling their stories. Residents at the home said it had been a joy to mix with the pupils and staff said the residents' faces would light up when the students visited.

Pupil Lily Rees said: "I enjoyed the Dementia Friendly project because I was able to interact with people that I didn't think I would be able to."

Another, Ryan Lewis, added: "I think helping at The Hollies was a great experience and I hope future year groups can get involved."

Due to the success of the project, opportunities to support people living with dementia has been embedded into the Welsh Baccalaureate at Pontarddulais Comprehensive and the school has included a visit to The Hollies as an option for pupils during their community challenge in the Welsh Baccalaureate.

According to the Alzheimer's Society a third of young people know someone living with dementia and, with over two million people developing dementia in the next ten years, most people will know someone affected by the condition in their lifetime.

The charity wants every young person to understand what it's like to live with dementia and to help it make a dementia friendly generation by teaching pupils about dementia.



Swansea Council's Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning and Skills, Jennifer Raynor said: "I'm very proud that Pontarddulais Comprehensive School is the first in Swansea to achieve this award and I'd congratulate pupils and staff."

- The Dementia Friendly Homes project involved collaboration between Social Services, People Speak Up, Swansea Bay University Health Board Community Resource Team, Local Area Co-ordination and Swansea Carers Centre. A booklet involving three families was produced by People Speak Up (PSU) and Sound Memories Radio to celebrate the project.
- The Community Dementia Support Team in Swansea has also been working to ensure that information and support is available to anyone who is concerned about changes to their memory with services that are more joined up and accessible.

#### Charter for Older People

- Swansea is committed to coproduction and a rights based approach. Our Ageing Well Engagement Plan ensures that Older people's views and issues are well represented and considered in all planning work, whether through the Big Conversation events, 50+ Network or through all our engagement work. Our Life Stages Team continues to work with the Commissioner's Office to support on-going work and campaigns such as #EverydayAgeism etc.

#### **5. How this Well-being Objective is contributing to the achievement of the national well-being goals.**

- *A prosperous Wales* –the child and adult health and social care market contributes significantly to the local and regional economy, with a skilled, professionalised workforce needed to meet growing demand.
- *A Resilient Wales* – supporting adults with a range of disabilities and needs to access well-being, learning and work experience opportunities, including support to manage coastal, wildlife and environmental habitats, e.g. working with the local Health Board to launch a Recovery College for people who have experience serious mental health issues.
- *A Healthier Wales* – by integrating and collocating health and social care services to safeguard people from harm, improving their physical, emotional and mental health and well-being, and by supporting people to maintain independence and quality of life throughout their life course. e.g. through Local Area Coordination
- *A more Equal Wales* – ensuring equal access to health and social care through information, advice and assistance and building on strengths of families and assets within communities to plan their own care and support, and to reach their full potential, increasingly by preventing the need for statutory services.
- *A Wales of Cohesive Communities* – through supportive and mutually responsible communities working together to safeguard our most people, with Council employees, elected Members and people in our communities feeling confident about identifying and reporting their safeguarding concerns in respect of children and adults.
- *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language* – Working with partners through the Ageing Well Strategy to deliver the active offer and apply our learning to improving social care, and through intergeneration working, including through the medium of Welsh.
- *A globally responsible Wales* – the Council's safeguarding arrangements are informed by the Council's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and human rights of all citizens



## **6. Lessons learnt and areas for development**

- Clearly recent events have placed great demands on the social care workforce and we need to ensure that the right steps are taken to enhance the wellbeing of our staff and their professional development.
- Safeguarding and protecting our most vulnerable citizens with their own voice at the centre of our work remains a priority. We still need to ensure that our efforts are targeted to where there is significant risk of harm and abuse and that we are working in a timely way, with the vulnerable person at the centre.
- Whilst Swansea is engaged in work on a regional strategic approach to support the wellbeing needs of carers and young carers, this needs to translate into a clear approach locally to make a difference in the lives of individuals.
- The impact of COVID-19 and the associated recovery will be a key focus for the remainder of 2020/21 and going into 2021/22.



## Improving Education and Skills

### 1. Why this is a Well-being Objective.

- We want Swansea to be one of the best places in the world for children and young people to grow up.
- We want every child and young person in Swansea to achieve, to be healthy, to be resilient and to be safe.
- We want children and young people to attend school regularly because they are more likely to achieve the skills and qualifications that they need to go on into further education, higher education, employment or training.
- We want children and young people to obtain qualifications and skills that are suited to the economic needs of the future and to be able to contribute positively as active local citizens.
- We want to prevent children from becoming disengaged from learning.
- As corporate parents of Looked After Children, we want our Looked After Children to succeed in school and to have opportunities for further education, higher education, employment or training.
- We acknowledge that a child or young person with additional learning needs requires timely and effective support to allow them to reach their full potential.
- We want our children and young people to be aware of their global rights and responsibilities so that they can be active and responsible citizens, fulfil their potential and make a difference to their communities.
- We want our children and young people to have good Welsh language skills.

### 2. The longer term challenges this well-being objective will help address.

- We want to provide our young people with the skills and opportunities arising from the City Deal, ensuring they have success in the STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), digital skills such as computer coding. We also want young people to develop creative and cultural careers and to receive the best quality advice and guidance for future occupations.

### 3. The steps we said we would take to meet this Well-being Objective.

- Align our education system and continue to develop and enhance partnerships to ensure we create the right people with the right skills to supply the new economies and meet the challenge of the Swansea Bay City Deal.
- Continue to support and challenge schools to improve attendance and pupil performance and encourage schools to support each other.
- Continue to develop and enhance school partnerships.
- Continue focusing on improving literacy (in English and Welsh), numeracy and digital competency at all ages.
- Improve the outcomes of Looked After Children and those with additional learning needs.
- Further improve provision and raise standards of achievement for pupils Educated Other Than At School (EOTAS) and further improve reintegration back into schools.
- Transform the schools' estate to meet demand and respond to the developments set out within the local development plan (LDP) whilst ensuring community benefits from contracts.
- Raise vocational aspirations and skill levels in the workplace, contributing to the development of ambitious, skilled young people and adults by providing apprenticeships.
- Develop independent learning skills for lifelong learning to reflect the changing nature of work and to support well-being, creativity and reduce social isolation



- Develop young citizens to respect rights, understand responsibilities and to be globally aware and responsible citizens by continuing to support schools to become UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools as part of our commitment to the UNCRC.
- Meet demand for Welsh-medium education and promote the use of Welsh in schools and socially through the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.
- We will, through our long term school building investment and structural maintenance programmes, reduce our carbon footprint.
- Ensure our vulnerable children are not disadvantaged by poverty or other factors that limit or restrict them in achieving and attaining standards and wellbeing in education.

#### **4. What success will look like.**

- Pupils, including vulnerable pupils, attend school regularly and have good literacy, numeracy, and educational success. We will continue to increase the number of Welsh medium places available. Pupils are made aware of their rights, their pupil voice contributes to education priorities and they have opportunities to learn about the value of the environment and working with nature. Outside of school, more young people take up apprenticeships in the Council/ wider community and that lifelong learning continues to be promoted.

#### **5. Making progress towards the steps to meet this Well-being Objective – what worked.**

##### Skills for the new economy and City Deal

- We are continuing to develop an intelligent knowledge regional network, based on a new dynamic relationship with schools, further education colleges, our two universities and employers, underpinning the needs identified in the Swansea Bay City Deal. We are working with Regional Learning and Skills Partnership which has links with more than 1000 business across South West Wales to produce further insight into the skills that are needed by industry and the opportunities presented by the Swansea Bay City Deal. A new plan was successfully launched at Ffos Las during 2019/20.
- One of the key projects within the Swansea Bay City Deal is the Skills and Talent project which aims to deliver a regional solution for the identification and delivery of the skills and training requirements for all City Deal projects. Working alongside partners from the private sector, higher and further education, schools and the third sector, the project team is mapping out gaps in current provision and identifying the skills and training needed for students, teachers and lecturers both now and in future.
- Our Swansea's Skills Partnership/Partneriaeth Sgiliau Abertawe (PSA) also provides an appropriate platform to build digital capacity through partnership working with a range of partners such as neighbouring FE institutions, Gower College, the universities and Careers Wales and have a strategic plan in place for the next three years. In addition, the partnership has a clear plan for providing young people with the best quality advice and guidance for future occupations.

##### School attendance and improvement

##### Attendance

- Welsh Government figures show an overall attendance rate for secondary schools of 94% in the city which is above the Welsh average and makes Swansea the fifth best performing area out of



22 for the last school year, despite being a decline from 94.15% for 2017/18. Primary attendance showed a slight improvement over the same period.

- Five years ago Swansea was ranked in the lower half of the 22 authorities in Wales for school attendance. The council set-up an Improvement Board to tackle the issue and a range of measures have been introduced.

#### School Performance

- Estyn's inspections of schools in Swansea indicates a strong profile of performance with no school in a statutory category of follow-up. Swansea's schools show a continuing improvement trend (last year in brackets), with 56 (47) primary schools rated Green, 20 (28) Yellow, 1 (3) Amber and none (1) were Red. Secondary schools moved in the same positive direction, with 10 (9) rated Green and 4 (5) Yellow. [Read more here.](#)
- Estyn reviewed arrangements make its work more about conversations with schools rather than judgements. Estyn will ensure their work supports the new curriculum and non-judgemental visits next year will be followed by a gap of a year to give breathing space. Following this the inspection regime will be different, with an integrated partnership approach although Estyn will still conduct inspections for schools where there are concerns.

#### Pupil achievement

*N.B. For 2018/19 Welsh Government changed the method by which it counted overall GCSE scoring, with a different combination of components of the Capped 9 score and only the first result for a pupil counting towards the L1 & L2 measures where the exam was sat more than once. Therefore comparisons cannot be made with previous years' results, but may be made between Swansea and other parts of Wales.*

- The figures show 21.2% of city pupils gained A\* and A grades in their WJEC exams, which is significantly better than the 18.4% for those in Wales as a whole. More than 75% of students achieved the higher grades of A\* to C in 15 out of the 44 different subjects examined. [GCSE results](#) \*
- Nearly 600 young people sat A Level examinations with many going on to university or other education and training. [A level results](#). The overall pass rate of 97.9% (97.6% in 2018) is above the Welsh average, with 28.4% being the top A\*-A grades.
- Overall 79.6% of grades were C or better in Swansea, compared to 76.3% for Wales.

#### School partnerships

- We have continued to work through ERW during 2019/20 - our regional education consortium to provide a single school improvement service. Consortium working has enabled us to share and learn from good practice and benefit from innovation and joint training. Schools in Swansea have benefitted from support to develop the literacy and numeracy skills of their pupils, improved the accuracy of teacher assessments and supported to prepare for new qualifications in secondary schools and developed greater digital competence. Schools in Swansea have also benefited from a range of virtual networks, and consistent guidance on Welsh as a second language. Challenge advisers have also received training on curriculum reform and schools as



learning organisations and school support visits have been used to help schools focus on Welsh Government priority areas.

- During 2019/20 there was emerging agreement on the need to change the regional footprint for school improvement, which had previously been directed by the Welsh Government – ideally to operate on the City Deal footprint. There is consensus that a different approach is needed where school improvement and education can be better aligned with economic opportunities and the ambitions of our young citizens. Future collaboration will be on the Swansea Bay City Deal footprint.

#### Literacy, numeracy and digital skills

- In the key core subjects of Mathematics, English Language and Welsh First Language Swansea's overall results compare very well to the national results.
- For Mathematics, the Swansea results were A\*-A 14.9%, A\*-C 57% and A\*-G 94.2%. The equivalent all-Wales figures for 2019 for Maths are 13%, 49.9% and 94.3%. For Mathematics-Numeracy the Swansea results were A\*-A 16.6%, A\*-C 60.8% and A\*-G 96.1%. The equivalent all- Wales figures for 2019 for Numeracy are 11.9%, 50.5% and 93.9%.
- For English Language, the Swansea results were A\*-A 14.3%, A\*-C 61.2% and A\*-G 98.9%. The equivalent all-Wales figures for 2019 for English are 10.7%, 54.7% and 98.4%.
- For Welsh First Language, the Swansea results were A\*-A 15.4%, A\*-C 71.3% and A\*-G 100%. The equivalent all- Wales figures for 2019 for Welsh First Language are 15.8%, 73.1% and 99.3%.

#### Looked after children (LAC) learners

- Pupils achieving the foundation phase indicator (FPI) at end of foundation phase (outcome 5 or higher in language, mathematics, PSD). In foundation phase the gap between looked after children (LAC) performance and all learners in Swansea has traditionally been the narrowest of any key stage.
- In 2019, LAC learners in Swansea were 8.6% points behind their peers. Overall the end of foundation phase results have fallen in Swansea and nationally since 2017 due to changes in the outcome descriptors meaning it's now harder for children to attain outcome 5. 13 of the 24 LAC in the cohort had additional learning needs.
- LAC learners in the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) at end of key stage 2 (KS2) Level 4+ in English/Welsh, Mathematics and Science achieved 74.3%, which is higher than previous year. In 2019, the key stage 2 gap between LAC learners and non-LAC learners in Swansea was 12.7%. 24 of the 35 LAC in the cohort had additional learning needs.
- In 2019 38.7% of LAC learners attained the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) at end of key stage 3 (KS3) Level 5+ in English/Welsh, Mathematics and Science. The LAC / non-LAC gap was 45.8%, higher than the previous year but care is needed in interpreting this data as there were only 31 LAC in the 2019 year 9 cohort. 24 of these had additional learning needs.
- At key stage 4 in 2019, there was a smaller than usual cohort of LAC learners in year 11, and 66.7% of these had additional learning needs. 16.7% - attained the level 2 inclusive measure



(5A\* - C including English/mathematics and science). The gap between LAC and non-LAC was 40.8% but must be viewed with care due to the low LAC numbers.

- Pupils achieving Level 1 at end of key stage 4 threshold, which is 5 A\*-G, has a much narrower margin with LAC learners achieving 88.9% compared with 94.8% for all learners. This is very pleasing as it shows good distance travelled for our vulnerable young people and it indicates good outcomes despite a high level of additional learning needs.
- Officers in Swansea work appropriately with regional officers to deliver good quality support for mathematics/numeracy and English at secondary level. Teaching and learning, for example, is supported efficiently through engagement with key delivery partners and making effective use of technology to improve learning experiences.
- When looking at LAC performance, it is important to consider the context of these pupil groups. Typically, LAC account for no more than 1% to 1.5% of each year group, and as children often move in and out from care episodes, the groups change regularly. Whilst about 25% of the general pupil population have additional learning needs, the proportion for LAC groups is usually 2 to 3 times this rate. Comparisons of LAC performance over time must therefore be used with care, as quite large fluctuations are to be expected.

#### Educated Other than At School (EOTAS)

- Work started in 2019/20 and good progress has been made to deliver the new EOTAS provision based at Cockett, which is on track for delivery by the end of 2020. Increases in planned places at Penybryn and new STFs at Dunvant, Portmead and Birchgrove are now fully implemented and embedded.

#### Case Study: New school for City's vulnerable pupils taking shape.

**A brand new teaching facility that is taking shape in Swansea will make a huge difference to the pupils and their teachers when they move in next year.** The school, which will provide a one of kind, purpose built, attractive and functional education provision for pupils Educated Other Than At School on land off Cockett Road, is now being built. When completed the school will replace the existing outdated pupil referral accommodation currently spread over three different sites at Brondeg House in Manselton, the Step-Ahead site in Cockett and the Arfryn Education Centre in Penlan. Head of the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), Amanda Taylor said: "It's going to make a massive difference because it will provide a much more positive and inviting learning environment that will enable us to provide greater opportunities for learning and to fully implement the new Curriculum for Wales." The new build at Cockett is being jointly funded by Swansea Council and the Welsh Government. Pupils who use the service range from age 5 to 16 and all struggle with aspects of their social, emotional or behavioural development. The council's aim, wherever possible, is to support them to return to mainstream education. Swansea Council's Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning and Skills, Jennifer Raynor added: "The young people supported at the PRU are among the most vulnerable in our communities. If their needs are not fully addressed then their chances of employment and wellbeing are greatly reduced. Our continuing investment in this service is an investment in their future."



## Transforming the schools estate

- Further modernisation of school facilities and classrooms will take place under the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme with a further £149.7m investment in school facilities in Swansea.
- A new school build for [Gorseinon Primary](#) is a £6.9m replacement for the outdated Victorian school in the town and a new purpose-designed Pupil Referral Unit is under construction in [Cockett](#). Plans are also in place and works commenced for the building of a new enlarge build on a less restricted site for [YGG Tan-y-lan](#) as well as a new build on a new site for YGG Tirdeunaw.
- Rebuilding and remodelling works totalling £15m were carried out in [Pentrehafod Comprehensive](#), and works are also progressing at YG Gwyr and Bishopston Comprehensive, with further upgrades planned at [Seaview Primary](#), [Birchgrove Comprehensive](#), [YG Gwyr](#) & [Penyrheol Primary](#) scheduled for completion in the coming year.
- And there are more improvement works in the pipeline, with 30 schools set to benefit from [capital investment](#) in the 2020/21 financial year as part of the annual structural maintenance programme.
- Band A projects are nearing completion and this has had a major impact, but we have now moved to Band B which is almost 3 times the size of Band A. Good progress is being made even though we will be delivering it with less officer capacity and resources across the Council.

## Apprenticeships and employability skills

- For those pupils who would like to follow a more non-academic route there are partnerships with a wide range of partners locally to ensure we are offering experience in the world of work, including a number of apprenticeships. The Apprenticeship Academy works with employers to develop opportunities which could be developed further. The 'Build me' programme with the Pupil Referral Unit in Cockett and the new Primary School at Parc y Werin in Gorseinon offers 2 days a week training opportunities in construction activities, including a supervised visit and discussion about different roles and skills required on site.
- The prevention of NEETS (Not in Education, Employment or Training) is a key priority in Swansea with early identification, tracking and co-ordination of support as key strategic themes. Lead workers are provided to support learners at risk of NEETS. In addition, the development of a proactive Youth Guarantee ensures that every young person has access to a suitable place in learning post-16 in line with the arrangements for further education colleges and work based learning. As of September 2019 UCAS Progress is replaced by an in-house Swansea alternative; My Choice.

### Case study: New council apprentices building a bright future

**A new team of apprentices started building a bright future at Swansea Council.** The apprenticeship starters in 2019, 13 recruits - men and women - will train for four years as the council develops a new generation of carpenters, plumbers, electricians, plasterers and multi-trade personnel. They will work on projects such as constructing top quality new schools and building new energy-efficient council homes. Jen Raynor, the council's cabinet member for education improvement, learning and skills, said: "Hiring apprentices is an investment in the future of the council and the city. We've been recruiting apprentices for a number of years and applications are always oversubscribed thanks to



our reputation for first-class training and producing high-quality trade and craftspeople. I wish our new recruits well and encourage others to apply in future. Of course, that includes women who - like men - can benefit from apprenticeships in all areas of the council's work." Andrea Lewis, the council's cabinet member for homes and energy, said: "This new intake will build on the hugely successful apprenticeship programme run by our Building Services team. They'll work on key schemes such as high-quality new council housing built to a new exacting Swansea Standard and bringing existing homes up to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard." New plumbing apprentice Yasmin Shipperley, aged 28, of Sketty, has recently been working in the field of eco-friendly grants. The mum-of-one said: "This is something I've always wanted to do. A large part of it is that I can now be a positive role model for my daughter Autumn, who's eight, and young women around Swansea looking to get into construction. If I can help break down a few barriers for other people I'll be really pleased."

### Lifelong learning

- More than 300 free events were organised by Swansea Council's Lifelong Learning Service and staged at venues across the city during a six day celebration of the many different learning opportunities available to young people and adults. Swansea schools, colleges, and universities offer courses in subjects as diverse as Business Support; Employment Skills; Health, Nature & Wellbeing; Digital Technology; Arts & Crafts; Music and Performance; plus Languages.
- As one of just three cities in the UK to be designated a Learning City by UNESCO there are opportunities for people of all ages to get involved with learning.
- The Swansea Learning Festival was held in April 2019 with over 9,000 participants taking part in over 300 learning opportunities, delivered by 130 partners. Feedback was positive with the majority of partners and participants wishing to be involved in future festivals.
- Interest has been high in the Swansea Learning Festival with the team invited to hold a number of presentations and workshops for both National and International bodies. A delegation of Dutch visitors attended a fact-finding workshop in Swansea to discover more about Swansea's UNESCO Learning City status as well as the organisation, coordination and execution of the Festival itself.
- Officers presented at the Learning and Work Institute Conference on the Festival and Learning City Status in September, as well as attending a conference in Slovenia promoting and highlighting the benefits of lifelong learning and the importance of Learning Festivals in ensuring inclusion, accessibility and partnership working. The presentations and workshops have been successful in raising the profile of Swansea's Learning City Status locally and nationally.

### Case study: Swansea Working

**Steven Williams had been unemployed for more than six years before being referred to the Communities at Work programme.** Initially officers worked with him to help rebuild his confidence and reinforce his determination to get back into work. He successfully completed his folk-lift training course and was helped to access funds for clothing and transport so he could attend work experience placements. His employability mentor helped Steven prepare for employment with a mock job interview and further advice and guidance. Not only has his involvement with Swansea Working helped him to develop new skills and boost his confidence, it has also seen a dramatic change in his health and wellbeing. He now has a job as a production operative with the hours and shift patterns that enable him to still care for his mother.



## UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools

- Swansea Council is continuing to ensure that Children and Young People have the opportunity to be involved in decisions made by the Council which affect them. The Council adopted the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 2014 which means that the Council must perform all its functions in a manner that Children and Young People must be provided with meaningful opportunities to influence decisions concerning their lives.
- The Council remains committed to respecting the Human Rights of children, the work of which is set out in our Children and Young People's Rights Scheme. All of our schools in Swansea are engaged with the Rights Respecting Schools Award and Teachers and Council Officers have been trained as assessors to enable schools to be recognised for their work on Children's Rights with no direct costs to the school. Work continues with schools, Unicef, the Children's Commissioner's Office for Wales and with learners themselves, to develop models that are most fit for purpose and aligned to the new curriculum, moving forward.
- Swansea Council has have continued to disseminate information about the UNCRC through a range of forums, events and projects across Swansea, including an online social media presence and celebrating the 5th International Children's Rights Day in Swansea by presenting our work to over 100 guests from across Wales.

### Case study: School praised for outstanding care, support and guidance

**Birchgrove Comprehensive School in Swansea provides outstanding care, support and guidance to all its pupils, inspectors have found.** This means pupils enjoy high levels of wellbeing and their positive attitudes make a significant contribution to the inclusive ethos of the school. Inspectors from Estyn visited the comprehensive in October and have now published their findings. They judged the school as excellent for wellbeing and attitudes to learning along with care, support and guidance. The report also said pupils make a meaningful and valuable contribution to school life, their opinions are listened to and the pupil-led "Rights Respecting Committee" makes a highly beneficial contribution to the life of younger pupils. Swansea Council's Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning and Skills, Jennifer Raynor, said: "This is another very good inspection report and I would congratulate all associated with the school."

### Pupil Voice

- Swansea Council continues to respect the right of every child to be listened to in decisions that affect them through a range of engagement mechanisms that fall within the Big Conversation. During 2019-20, 9 Big Conversations took place involving 1152 children and young people and members of the public. This year, the age range of participants in the Big Conversations was extended from 11-18 years to 50 years +, including older people at Intergenerational Forums. Members of the public and 50+ Network group, along with residents from care homes and day centres, joined children and young people in structured activities, discussions and explorations of key issues, including the Council Budget, Children's Rights, commonalities and differences between different age groups and digital assistive technology.

### Carbon footprint

- Swansea Council has supported community-owned renewable energy schemes, like SCEES, to deliver clean energy and benefit local schools and community buildings. The Council has supported the international Eco Schools programmes, which encourages schools to promote



recycling and reduce energy and water consumption and encouraged our Foundation Phase learning pupils to learn outdoors ensuring a respect for nature, biodiversity and eco-systems. For pupils at Key Stage 4 we have worked in partnerships with our Universities to establish STEM workshops, including on the impact of climate change.

#### Welsh medium education

- The promotion of Welsh in order to meet the WG ambition to have 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050 requires Swansea to expand the capacity of schools offering Welsh-medium education. Projects for new build schools with enhanced provision have been commenced for [YGG Tan-y-Lan](#) and [YGG Tirdeunaw](#) with works to improve and enhance facilities also being carried out at [YG Gwyr](#).
- Following approval in principle of Strategic Outline Programme funding envelope by Welsh Government, work will continue to progress to develop and submit detailed business cases in respect of the remaining investment priorities in relation to Welsh-medium provision.

#### Case study: Construction of new home for Welsh-medium primary school

**In order to reach Welsh Government's target of growing the number of Welsh speakers to one million by the year 2050, Swansea's Welsh In Education Strategic Plan is looking to provide an additional 850 places at Welsh-medium schools in the city to meet growing demand.**

YGG Tirdeunaw is based at the former Daniel James secondary school site at Heol Ddu, however the current buildings are no longer suitable for the increasing demand for places at the school. The existing school provides 420 full-time places and 60 nursery places but the new build neighbouring YGG Bryn Tawe would provide places for 525 full-time pupils and 75 nursery places along with a Flying Start/Dechrau Deg initiative. The new school site will be jointly funded by Swansea Council and the Welsh Government under the council's 21st Century School Programme.

#### Poverty and achievement

- Swansea continues to perform above the Welsh average in GCSE results for pupils in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM). The new Capped 9 measure saw FSM pupils in Swansea achieve an average score of 324.4 against the national average of 298.4, with 92.3% achieving the Level 1 (5 grades A\*-G), 31.4% Level 2 (5 grades A\*-C) and 7.2% being awarded 5 grades of A or A\*.

#### Case study: Children enjoy excellent opportunities to play and learn at Pentrechwyth Flying Start

**Young children attending the Ladybirds Flying Start at Pentrechwyth School enjoy excellent opportunities to play and learn in a secure and happy environment that gives them the best possible start, according to inspectors.** The service has been rated as excellent in all four inspection areas of wellbeing; care and development; environment and leadership and management by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW). In its report that has been published this week, CIW said children are thriving and developing in a service that provides them with a broad range of play and learning opportunities. Inspectors added: "There are strong partnerships in place with parents, other professionals, agencies and the wider community." Ladybirds Pentrechwyth Flying Start provides care for up to 16 children aged two to three and offers two sessions a day. Cllr Elliott King, Swansea Council's Cabinet Member for Children's Services, said: "I would like to congratulate everyone associated with Ladybirds Flying Start on this outstanding report. To be judged as excellent across the board is a rarity and shows young children in Pentrechwyth are getting the best possible start to life. Thank you to all those involved."



## **6. How this Well-being Objective is contributing to the achievement of the national wellbeing goals.**

- *A prosperous Wales* – Responding to the City Deal by ensuring young people have success in STEM subjects and digital skills, such as computer coding.
- *A Resilient Wales* – Supporting schools to become Eco Schools increasing understanding, respect and appreciation of our environment.
- *A Healthier Wales* – Continuing to involve children in their education through Pupil Voice, Schools Councils and Big Conversation events. Topics have included mindfulness in schools, bullying, homelessness and healthy relationships. Public Health Wales' healthy schools initiative sees a high level of engagement in Swansea schools to promote nutrition, physical activity, relationships, awareness of substance misuse, emotional health and wellbeing, safety, hygiene and the environment.
- *A more Equal Wales* – Ensuring that children are not disadvantaged by poverty or other limiting factors when achieving and attaining standards and well-being in education.
- *A Wales of Cohesive Communities* – Transforming the schools estate to meet demand and to respond to the developments set out within the local development plan (LDP)
- *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language* – Meeting demand for Welsh-medium education and promoting the use of Welsh in schools through the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.
- *A globally responsible Wales* – Teaching young citizens to respect rights, understand responsibilities and be globally aware by continuing to support schools to become UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools as part of the Council's commitment to the UNCRC.

## **7. Lessons learnt and areas for development**

The following are areas that will be priorities for education:

- Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Reform – ALNET Act 2018
- Curriculum for Wales (including for example: changes to qualifications, greater emphasis on wellbeing, welsh language digital competence, developing initial teacher training.
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), including increasing mental health issues as barriers to learning, behaviour in schools.
- Elective Home Education
- National Programme to develop schools' leaders
- Embedding professional standards for teaching and learning
- Changing accountability systems, including categorisation and inspection systems likely to change, what will they look like in the future
- National professional learning offer
- Changes to pupil assessment, this will be parallel to introduction of new curriculum, expect assessment to change, what will this look like in the future and possible new measures
- Schools becoming learning organisations, schools developing a strong vision for teaching and learning, inviting others in to see practice and going out and collaborating with others.

### **Additional Learning Needs (ALN)**

- The local authority is facing unprecedented change in the area of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) following the introduction of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 (ALNET Act 2018). At the heart of these reforms is a focus on inclusion; putting children and young people at the centre and ensuring they are supported to reach their full potential. The ALNET Act and Code will place a number of mandatory duties on Local Authorities



and other responsible bodies such as Health Boards and Welsh Government Ministers from September 2021.

- We have made good initial progress during 2019/20 and into 2020/21 in raising awareness and starting work with other agencies and the region to develop an integrated local offer that will meet the needs of learners with ALN across the 0 to 25 age range. We have developed an ALN Strategy and Implementation Plan and created an ALN Strategy Steering Group of key stakeholders including parent/carers to oversee the implementation of the Strategy. We are leading on workforce development for ALNET (Wales) Act 2018 across the region by coordinating a training plan for the region. A re-structure of the ALN teams within the Local Authority is being undertaken in order to ensure that we can meet the needs of learners in a timely manner and build capacity for ALN within our schools and our specialist teaching facilities. Partnership working with Early Years Services, Health and Social Services is continuing to be developed. For example, this year Additional Learning Needs (ALN) training was delivered by Flying Start staff and Education professionals to the private childcare sector in order to raise awareness about the ALNET (Wales) Act 2018 and to develop more robust relationships between childcare practitioners and schools in relation to transitions.

#### Skills for the new economy and City Deal

- The Council is streamlining its approach to regional school improvement and connecting the work of the Regional Skills and Learning Partnership and the City Deal Skills and Talent initiative. It is essential that these work streams are aligned to secure maximum benefit for our learners from future economic regeneration in Swansea.

#### Vulnerable pupils

- Free School Meal (FSM) learners continue to attain significantly below other pupils, which is of concern and Looked After Children educational outcomes are similarly low; however comparisons are difficult due to vulnerabilities of this group of children and the volatility of the data used caused by the small number in each cohort. Performance of pupils receiving Free School Meals:
- At Foundation Phase, the overall picture of performance is of decline with a sharp decline in FSM pupils. Performance is based on teacher assessment and schools are being much truer and more secure in their assessments than ever before.
- At Key Stage 2, there have been fewer changes for KS2 pupils and this is reflective in the data. It does show progress being made, although there has been declining performance, teacher assessment is secure.
- At Key Stage 4, the gap in performance between FSM and non-FSM has narrowed a little. However, performance has fallen this year and this is because a new suite of examinations, that are harder, were introduced.
- The numbers of fixed term exclusions have increased over the past 3 years. Where there have been significant increases at school level, officers monitor closely. Permanent exclusions are examined case by case and the prevention of permanent exclusions by offering suitable alternatives remains a priority. Closer analysis of data and dissemination of suitable alternate solutions are in place to address the increase. In addition, a new Swansea positive behaviour policy in schools has been shared widely and will support the reduction in future. All schools have also had access to further training on adverse childhood experiences.



- Pupil Referral Unit exclusions have increased. Work is continuing across schools to ensure a consistent threshold for behaviour intervention, such as referral to EOTAS and exclusions. Under the behaviour strategy, monies have been devolved to secondary schools to develop and improve their graduated response to pupils at risk of EOTAS. Swansea is keen to progress the development of a new special school provision. It is also looking to review the number and range of specialist teaching facilities in line with changes in demand.

#### Pupil attainment

- At Key Stage 3, there has been a big decline in all pupil performance but this has also been reflected across Wales and is within tolerance levels.
- Changes to national measures at Key Stage 4 mean it is not possible to compare results with those from previous years. Performance in Swansea schools remains strong and provisional outcomes compare well to the regional and national results. The way of monitoring outcomes and performance is changing, as directed by Welsh Government, so this is currently in a state of flux due to the introduction of the new curriculum and changes to measures. Moving forward performance will focus much more on individual pupil outcomes.
- Foundation phase attainment fell in 2018 and 2019. However, the overall percentage remains high and the confidence in the accuracy of teacher assessment also remains high.
- It must be noted that headline indicators using teacher assessment are subject to review and there is a recognition from Welsh Government and Estyn that these performance indicators are no longer useful in terms of prior performance and comparative performance.

#### UNCRC and rights based education

- Future plans include: a review and refresh of the Children and Young People's Rights Scheme based on academic review, and engagement with children, young people, families, the wider public, members, council staff and wider partners; a review of rights based education, with a view to develop sustainable and effective mechanisms for learning about rights.



## Transforming our **Economy & Infrastructure**

### **1. Why this is a Well-being Objective**

- We want to raise economic performance and create wealth and employment opportunities to improve the economic wellbeing of Swansea's citizens
- The biggest ever investment for south west Wales has been secured following the approval of the ground-breaking Swansea Bay City Deal on 20th March 2017.
- The City Deal is worth £1.3 billion deal and will transform the economic landscape of the area, boost the local economy by £1.8 billion, and generate almost 10,000 new jobs over the next 15 years.
- In Swansea, 100,000 square feet of flexible and affordable new office space will be constructed on Kingsway in the city centre for tech businesses as part of a digital village that will benefit from world-class digital infrastructure.
- The City Deal will lead to a 215,000 square foot box village development on the University of Wales Trinity Saint David's under-construction Waterfront Innovation Quarter in SA1 providing affordable space for start-up firms.
- The City Deal will also support the digitalisation of the 3,500 indoor arena planned for the city centre's Swansea Central development site, as well as the development of a digital square to include digital screens and digital artworks..
- The City Deal will further drive the physical regeneration of the city centre in line with our revised City Centre Strategic Framework – in particular, property development and enhancement and associated transport improvements, delivering enabling infrastructure to support regeneration.
- We want to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the City Deal and regeneration of the city centre by creating employment and training opportunities for unemployed and economically inactive people through community benefit clauses in contracts and delivering employability support services in partnership with other council services and external partners.
- We want a planning policy framework that supports growth and regeneration and ensures that communities have sufficient good quality housing at sustainable locations to meet community needs and support sustainable economic growth.
- We want to take advantage of untapped growth potential to generate sustainable energy, protect the environment and boost the economy, including continuing to lobby the government to approve the Tidal Lagoon.
- We want to take advantage of Swansea's natural, cultural and built assets and infrastructure to develop the economy while protecting the environment and improving well-being.

### **2. The steps we said that we would take to meet this Well-being Objective.**

- Work with partners to implement the City Deal to invest in digital infrastructure and support investment, innovation, growth, jobs, skills and productivity.
- Take advantage of the opportunities presented by the City Deal and continue the regeneration of the city centre.
- Promote and enhance a diverse and sustainable local economy.
- Prepare a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the City Centre.
- Adopt the local development plan (LDP) that supports the regeneration of Swansea and promotes sustainable communities.
- Create employment & training opportunities for the long-term unemployed and economically inactive through community benefit clauses in contracts.
- Improve, expand and diversify leisure, cultural and heritage facilities and infrastructure to help boost the economy, promote tourism and improve wellbeing.



- Effect the successful transfer of Leisure facilities to the Council's new delivery partner and develop a long-term sustainability strategy for 'in house' services across the portfolio including Libraries, Theatres, Galleries and Museums.
- Progress the Hafod Copperworks project and refresh the Riverside Corridor Strategy to identify complementary developments.
- Continue to work with Skyline Ltd to deliver of the Gondola and Luge project at Kilvey Hill
- Build on the legacy of Swansea's bid to be UK City of Culture by active participation in Culture 21 Pilot programme and delivering the nine commitments for Culture in Sustainable Cities.
- Promote public leisure and cultural events to help improve well-being, promote community cohesion and provide economic benefits.
- Work with partners to secure an international sport village and centre of sporting excellence.
- Deliver the Energy Strategy to reduce costs, provide cheaper energy and reduce our carbon footprint.
- Oversee the management and development of the City Centre evening and night-time economy, including the retention of the Purple Flag, to ensure it is a safe, clean and welcoming place to work and visit.
- Work collaboratively through the new Regeneration Swansea Partnership to progress Swansea's economic regeneration agenda, including the delivery of the Targeted Investment Programme.
- Work with others to provide sustainable and low carbon transport and infrastructure providing improved and cheaper connectivity and mobility and associated economic benefits at reduced environmental cost and improved air quality.
- Maintain and enhance biodiversity and protect Swansea's green spaces, including parks for recreation and play, to promote health and well-being.
- Manage Swansea's coastline, promote improved bathing water quality and maintain Blue Flag status at Swansea's beaches to encourage tourism, protect the environment and support well-being.
- Progress strategic housing and mixed development sites to meet housing need and provide employment.
- Protect and promote the health, wellbeing, safety and consumer interests of people living in or visiting Swansea by working with others to maintain public safety across the range of regulatory services such as pollution, scams and unfair trading, public health and housing issues, etc.

### **3. What success will look like.**

- Swansea has an economy that utilises natural, sporting and cultural assets. Through the City Deal, the investment in digital infrastructure and the regeneration of Swansea and the City Centre, the economy provides more of the right jobs, growth, skills, training and productivity whilst housing need is met and social, cultural and environmental well-being is supported.

### **4. Progress taking steps to meet this Well-being Objective – what worked.**

#### **City Deal and City Centre**

- The first phase of City Deal funding worth £18 million across the region has been released by the UK and Welsh Governments following approval of the Swansea City and Waterfront Digital District project. Construction work has begun on a state-of-the-art, 3,500-capacity digital indoor arena that will benefit from world class digital connectivity. A digital plaza, St David's Square will also be constructed outside the arena, complete with digital artworks and other digital features.
- The £135m Swansea Central Phase One transformation scheme includes new parkland, around a 1,000 parking spaces, and homes and commercial units. To make way, a 40 year old grey



footbridge was successfully removed in February 2020. A striking new design for pedestrian and cycle use has been commissioned by artist Marc Rees. The new origami cut out style design is based on Swan abstracts and the gold coloured materials reflect Swansea's copper industry heritage.

- The Carne Group has been designated the bidder for the Swansea Central Phase One hotel site. The nationally renowned premium hotel operator is in discussions with a number of international hotel brands for the site.
- A 100,000 square foot digital village development is being constructed on Kingsway, providing cutting-edge working spaces for tech and digitally focussed businesses. This will act as a catalyst for new private sector led development and accommodate growing ICT focused businesses from Swansea University and UWTSD incubation facilities. Involvement has strengthened the plans for a glass fronted six storey structure. This includes a green wall, rooftop garden and space suitable for cultural events and with access reconnecting the Kingsway and Oxford Street.
- The Kingsway's £12m infrastructure project was on track for completion prior to disruption due to coronavirus. The Kingsway is now greener, healthier and more pedestrian-friendly due to new road surfaces and landscaping work. Swansea is being re-shaped as a green, walkable city. Work has started to pedestrianise the upper section of Union Street and an adjoining part of Park Street. A new two way traffic system was ready for introduction but implementation was postponed due to the impact of COVID-19.
- Following consultation, we are progressing the development of Castle Square with the Council undertaking the role of developer. Funding has been identified to take forward a feasibility study and business plan for consideration. The scheme considers new restaurant units in Castle Square and a re-imagined green public space but maintains the size of the current open space.
- The transformation of the city centre resulting from private and other public service investment aligns with Swansea Council's regeneration strategy, which aims to facilitate more people living and working in the city centre. Orchard House is being redeveloped as living and retail space by Pobl Group. While the £45m Oldway Centre redevelopment on High Street will be home to more than 550 students, the Mariner Street development will house 725 students along with 20,000 sq ft of commercial space and new Kingsway development 310 students .
- The Civic Centre site on the seafront near the city centre has expansive views over Swansea Bay. The intention is for the council's offices to be relocated to the public sector hub within the Swansea Central North development, and for this site to be redeveloped as a residential-led mixed use development. The Public Sector Hub which will enable both Swansea Council and other public bodies to co-locate services in the city centre.

#### **Case Study: Plans revealed for public-influenced high-tech Swansea building**

**Plans for a ground-breaking building allowing exciting young tech and creative businesses to grow was unveiled for Swansea city centre.** They show a glass-fronted structure rising six stories on the site of The Kingsway's former Oceana nightclub. More than 600 people could work there. The plans, assisted by feedback in a public consultation last year, feature two underground levels and a roof terrace with trees. Other greenery, including a green roof, is part of the plans for the building, reflecting the Council's commitment to green infrastructure. Swansea Council wants to develop the striking creative hub, with access for the public. It includes a new link from Oxford Street onto The Kingsway. The building will be high-tech, eco-friendly and have flexible open-plan work spaces



including balconies overlooking the city centre. The building is one of Swansea's major regeneration projects now underway and will stand close to the planned new Biophilic Living - an eco-friendly building with homes and commercial space being driven by Wales-based Hacer - if that goes ahead.

### Local Development Plan

- The adoption of the Local Development Plan in February 2019 has been followed by a review of all existing and development of new supplementary planning guidance (SPG) to ensure alignment. Consultation has taken place on SPG that provides additional information on new Houses of Multiple Occupation planning policies within the Local Development Plan. Work has also commenced on SPG relating to green infrastructure policy. Work has commenced on a Strategic Development Plan to complement the LDP.

### Green Infrastructure Strategy

- Green infrastructure is a term used to describe all the features of the natural environment between and within our towns and cities. Consultation with people who live, work and visit the city centre in 2018/19 was used to prepare a draft strategy 'Swansea Central Area - Regenerating Our City for Wellbeing and Wildlife', which went out to consultation in August 2019. The draft Strategy was then finalised and subject to formal adoption its recommendations and approaches are already being applied and influence development in the city centre. This strategy sets out a vision for central Swansea that maximises green spaces using a combination of street-level features like street trees and rain gardens as well as vegetation on buildings, including green roofs and green walls.
- The strategy sets out a vision for the central area of Swansea to be much greener. The intention is to double the amount of green infrastructure within 10 years, creating a high quality environment better adapted to climate change and welcoming for people and wildlife. It also aims to help the city centre be a more economically prosperous hub for the region in years to come by encouraging strategically planned green infrastructure enhancements in new and existing developments.

### Employment & Training Opportunities

- Almost 540 people have been helped into work or to find a better job in the first 18 months since Swansea Council's employability service was re-launched. Swansea Working and its partners have also helped more than 1,100 receive training and supported more than 2,450 people. Swansea Working, along with partners at Pobl, Coastal and Family Housing supported the Swansea delivery of 'The Pop Up Business School' in September 2019 which offered potential entrepreneurs workshops and courses to help start a business.
- Trainee posts are also available in non-traditional areas as part of nationwide collaborative programmes. The Cultural Ambition Project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Welsh Government's Museums, Archives and Libraries Division involved Swansea Museum working with partners at the Waterfront Museum and Swansea University's Egypt Centre to host young people with diverse backgrounds looking to gain skills and experience in cultural heritage.
- The Beyond Bricks and Mortar team continue to drive forward the Council's Social Benefit policy working across council services, partner organisations and the private sector to secure community benefits are embedded in contracts. In 2019-20 2,603 number of weeks of jobs and training were achieved, 27 new projects commenced resulting in 74 new jobs. In addition,



contractors have refurbished a number of kitchens & bathrooms and continue to deliver wider community benefits for the local communities.

#### Leisure, cultural and heritage facilities / infrastructure

- This year we have leased the Grand Theatre's Arts wing to the Race Council Cymru (RCC) to support the development of a cultural and digital hub. We have a long standing collaboration with Race Council Cymru and have also committed to working with Unities Cities and Local Government in a Pilot Cities programme to develop cultural participation as part of sustainable city making and have developed a long term. The aim of the Culture and Digital Hub is to provide rehearsal and production space to small Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) run arts organisations and to increase the involvement of people with protected characteristics in cultural and arts based activities and programmes.
- The hub also includes a new provision for community learning/digital experiences. It will provide communities with a city centre space to share in the culture of others. Communities leading with RCC in the hub consultation included the African Community Centre, the Chinese in Wales Association, the Swansea Women's Asylum Seeker & Refugee Support Group and the Jewish Community. The hub is supported by many service providers including the Swansea Council for Voluntary Service (SCVS) and South Wales Police.

#### Case Study: City theatre to be the stage for a Welsh cultural first

**Swansea's historic Grand Theatre is to be home to a pioneering culture and digital hub - the first operation of its kind in Wales.** The venue's Arts Wing is to become a focus for more than 20 grassroots communities who will help develop a diverse arts programme. The hub will host new opportunities for the arts, cultural events, community activities and skills programmes. It will develop an ethnic street food café and offer a catering support service. Race Council Cymru, with the support of Welsh Government funding, will improve and upgrade the Arts Wing to provide new spaces for arts development, community offices, digital support and teaching space. Robert Francis-Davies, the council's cabinet member for investment, regeneration and tourism, said: "This ground-breaking joint venture agreement will diversify Swansea's cultural audiences and will achieve more than £150,000 in new annual income for the Grand." The hub will be a Welsh first and it's right that, with an evolving society and changing cultural needs, the Grand - at more than 120 years old - is at the forefront of change. The theatre will, of course, continue to offer its celebrated wide range of top class entertainment in its beautiful main auditorium.

- Swansea Council continues to contribute to key attractions as part of a commitment to the health and wellbeing of our residents and the cultural life of the city. The LC, National Waterfront Museum Swansea and Wales National Pool Swansea make an important contribution to our tourism industry which is worth £440m a year and supports more than 5,000 jobs. The latest tourism figures for 2018 from STEAM once again show an increase on previous year by 3% to £447.74 m. Similarly, there was also a 3% increase in visitors to the area, whilst the number of jobs supported rose by 0.9% to 5,753.

#### Transfer of Leisure facilities

- Freedom Leisure has operated local centres on behalf of Swansea Council since October 2018 and together we are improving leisure locally, with a £5.1m council-funded investment across the city. New facilities at the city centre LC and improvements to the Penlan, Morriston and Bishopston leisure centres are already attracting new members. Work at Penyheol Leisure



Centre has included a refurbished fitness studio facility, training space with indoor track and gym with new Technogym equipment as well as the addition of a community space in reception. Energy efficient lighting and mechanical and electrical improvements have also been made to reduce energy costs and carbon footprint.

#### Case study: Us Girls Swansea

**Us Girls Swansea is an award winning initiative to encourage girls aged 8-14 to engage in sport and physical activity in a friendly non-judgemental environment.** Camps take place during school holidays in communities with high rates of deprivation. They offer a wide variety of sports and activities. Girls also take part in workshops and discussions on topics relevant to them, including emotional health, barriers to being active, confidence and self-esteem. The ethos of the camps is fun, fitness and friends. In 2020, Us Girls Swansea won the national StreetGames Award which showcases the power of sport to create positive change in the lives of young people. Us Girls Swansea Camps launched around five years ago and are organised in partnership with Freedom Leisure which runs Swansea's community leisure centres and the LC on behalf of the council and local people. Partner organisations include South Wales Police, Infonation and Barod, ConfiDance, Welsh Netball, the Ospreys and specialist coaches.

- Parkwood Leisure Ltd were awarded a 15-year contract to operate Plantasia in 2019. They took over the operation from the Council on the 1st of February 2019. Following on from the planned January closure of Plantasia for annual maintenance and safety works. Plantasia remained closed until April 2019 in order for Parkwood Leisure to carry out significant capital works. The revamped attraction now includes Caiman crocodiles, rope bridges, a tree hut high amongst the foliage, and interactive waterfall.

#### The Tawe River Corridor and Hafod Copperworks

- We have developed a River Tawe master plan which aims to develop a modern, attractive and vibrant riverside urban area, creating a place where people wish to live, work and visit, capitalising upon and celebrating the Tawe's unique contribution to the Industrial Revolution. Listed building consent and planning permissions are in place and funds have been secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the Welsh Government's TRI programme.
- We are making good progress with the development of the Hafod Morfa Copperworks and have procured and repaired key historical buildings. Working with Swansea University and other partners we have transformed the site by clearing invasive vegetation, carrying out community archaeology fieldwork, stabilising buildings at risk, improving access for visitors, laying out trails, and providing information and interpretation for visitors.
- We have made good progress working with Penderyn Whisky to establish a working distillery and tourist centre. The initial phase of repairs to Musgrave Engine House and Vivian Engine House are nearing completion. The procurement of the Powerhouse and outbuildings redevelopment (Penderyn) is also nearing completion with an anticipated start date on site in May 2020. There have been considerable archaeological finds adding value to the scheme.
- Landore's 110-year-old Bascule Bridge is key heritage feature of the Hafod-Morfa Copperworks site. The aim is to re-install the restored 70-tonne steel span at its site crossing the River Tawe next year following removal for assessment and restoration work at Afon Engineering, Swansea Vale. Investigations are also underway on the bridge's timber trestles that form a rigid frame to



support the span, working closely with Welsh historic buildings body Cadw to establish what restoration works are required and how.

- It is anticipated that the Skyline development at Kilvey Hill will create 4 Luge tracks, zip lines, and visitor facilities. The Skyline company has visited and met with the Council and Natural Resources Wales, It is has developed proposals which include improving access to and the ecology of the area. Heads of Terms have been signed by the Council and the Skyline board and survey work has commenced. Discussions are progressing well between Skyline and Welsh Government for a financial support to make the scheme financially viable to Skyline.

#### City of Culture, Promoting leisure and cultural events

- We are participating in a 'Culture in Sustainable Cities - European Pilot' programme led by United Cities and Local Government that aims, through peer learning and collaboration, to embed culture in sustainable 'city making'. A result of the Agenda 21 commitments, the programme has involved us working toward nine core policy commitments to place culture at the heart of strategies for citizen and government collaboration and participation in creating a sustainable city; exploring governance, cultural rights, learning, planning and equality for all.
- Our work to date has resulted in a commitment to create a 'Diversity Pledge', which outlines the ways in which co-production, collaboration and new ways of delivery can promote greater participation and access to culture in our city. During October 2019 we held a Peer Learning Session which focused on the principles of a 'Diversity Pledge' within the context of Swansea, current challenges and pressures, exploring opportunities to deliver a commitment to all our citizens, especially those most at risk of exclusion due their protected characteristics.

#### Case study: Fusion programme

**The Fusion Programme is a Welsh Government funded activity managed in the City by the Councils' Cultural Services Team.** The aim is to support creativity and build confidence and cohesion across communities. The programme worked with partners including GS Artists a local artist run gallery on the annual '9 to 90 Creative Community Exhibition' featuring work from people across Swansea. This year's activity attracted 279 entries, including crafts, photography, paintings and prose submitted by individuals, schools, colleges, support groups and adult learning groups. Fusion also worked with the Dylan Thomas Centre and Swansea University's creative writing department to deliver a six month creative writing project for the second year. Writers of all abilities - from newcomers to lifelong enthusiasts - attended the monthly classes. This year's theme is sanctuary, inspired by Swansea's tenth year as a City of Sanctuary and Wales' aspirations to become a nation of sanctuary. Fusion also worked with Swansea Museum to bring together hundreds of items of Swansea music memorabilia loaned by dozens of citizens past and present. The exhibition '50 years of Music' celebrated the cities musical heritage linking in with Swansea's 50 Year celebrations.

- The Events programme continues to grow and now attracts in excess of 0.5m people each year. Visitors to our Events add a significant boost to the local economy estimated as being in the region of £20m each year. Croeso a two-day festival celebrating St David's Day and all things Welsh was held in Swansea's city centre and the market. The Croeso Food and Drink Festival celebrated local produce with celebrity chefs staging demonstrations. The City Centre has hosted a range of events from a superheroes themed event, cinema screenings in school holidays, sports fixtures, Halloween, Easter Christmas celebrations including the Christmas Parade, Christmas Market and Waterfront Winterland.



### Case Study: Swansea celebrates 50 Years as a city

**Hundreds of people from an historic neighbourhood enjoyed a free street party to celebrate 50 years of Swansea - and many more residents from across the city joined them.** Residents of Sandfields got together with friends from across Swansea to help mark half a century of city status. The party featured live music, other performances, street food and free activities. There was art, poetry, drumming, a pop-up skate park, rides and games. Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration and Tourism, said: "Now is a great time for us to celebrate both our city's heritage and its future. But the most important part is our invitation to the people of Swansea to get involved in the celebrations by organising their own events whether that's a local carnival, community shows or their own street parties. More than anything Swansea 50 should be a celebration of Swansea by the people of Swansea for the people of Swansea. Everyone can be part of it."

- The Council invests in a full cultural programme of events throughout each year, this year most activities have linked or built upon the 50th year celebration theme. Highlights of this year's programme included; a free 50th Anniversary themed Fireworks night held for the first time on Swansea Bay attended by 30,000 and a spectacular city centre Christmas Parade with surprise 50th anniversary firework spectacular. The Wales Airshow broke attendance records again this year as it also included a special Swansea 50 Airshow After Dark evening event. A free 50 year celebration street party in the Sandfield was planned with both citizens and partner organisations. The Glyn Vivian Art Gallery staged a popular 'Swansea Stories' exhibition, Swansea museum exhibited '50 years of music' and libraries held parties and events.
- Our 50th celebrations have also included a number of activities with partners to promote diversity including; the LGBT History Month, International Women's Day, Black History Month, Holocaust Memorial Day, Swansea Pride, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, Swansea Eid in the Park, Deaf Awareness Day, Interfaith Awareness Month and Mental Health Awareness week. 2019 was the 39th year of The Swansea Special Festival – an event which welcomes over 400 children & adults taking part in a mixture of competitive and social activities; 2020 will be the 40th anniversary of the Festival.

### International Sports Village / centre sporting excellence

- We have continued to work with Swansea University and our partners to explore the options to deliver an International Sports Village. We also plan to deliver upon a rebranding of the Sports Park at Ashleigh Road, in partnership with the University and Wales National Pool, including fully integrated booking systems for all associated facilities at the site. A replacement hockey surface was completed in October 2019 and discussions are ongoing in relation to future funding opportunities to provide additional facilities at the site, including the replacement of existing surfaces and new 3G facilities.

### Energy Strategy

- Swansea Council is setting out to become one of the most energy-efficient local authorities in Wales. Over the last decade the council has slashed its carbon footprint by 30% but has plans to go even further over the coming years. The Council declared a Climate Emergency on 29 June 2019, this recognised the importance of energy related and other actions taken to date in reducing carbon emissions, enhancing biodiversity, and securing a prosperous, low-carbon



economy for our region. It also acknowledged the importance of working with expert partners to identify how we can build on these actions moving forward.

- The Energy Strategy is a key means by which the Council reduces its carbon footprint. It was last updated in April 2016 and a review to develop and implement a clear route map plan towards moving the council being net carbon zero by 2030 is underway. However, it is acknowledged that it needs to be flexible to accommodate the forthcoming Welsh Government Carbon Emissions Reporting requirements. Implementation of key elements of the Energy Strategy are ongoing and detailed below while activities around renewable energy and a green fleet are detailed under the Natural Resources and Biodiversity Well-being Objective.
- We have delivered insulation and energy efficiency measures to benefit tenants of our council housing and promoted Welsh & UK Government campaigns and programmes to increase energy efficiency amongst private tenants and homeowners, reducing fuel poverty and reducing emissions. The Council has also procured a contract to utilise Energy Company Obligation (ECO and Eco-flex) as well as other subsidies to fund energy efficiency measures for both public and private sector housing as well as kick start new schemes.
- We are also participating in the Welsh Government supported Re:fit Low Carbon Programme in order to implement energy efficiency saving opportunities in non-domestic buildings and centralisation of the council's utility budgets. A £1.3 million interest free loan has been secured from Welsh Government Wales Funding Programme (Salix) to deliver a project comprising over 18 buildings which is projected to save an estimated 400 tCO<sub>2</sub>e every year.

#### **Case study: Freedom Leisure and Carbon Reduction**

**Freedom Leisure is starting an extensive energy improvement scheme at four of the Swansea leisure centres it operates on behalf of the Council.** As part of the Council's commitment to reduce Swansea's carbon footprint, investment has been made in energy saving measures at The LC and at Morriston, Penlan and Penyrheol leisure centres. Penyrheol Leisure Centre work has included new high-efficiency gas boilers and LED lights in the pool, sports hall, changing rooms, gym hall and corridors. An energy-efficient new pool cover has been installed along with high-efficiency heating circuit pumps and motors. New heating and ventilation controls are in place to help deliver long-term environmental and sustainability benefits. Solar photovoltaic panels have been installed on the roof at the Morriston and Penlan centres while solar thermal panels have been installed at Penyrheol.

#### **Sustainable and low carbon transport**

- Swansea Council has been successful in bidding for the Welsh Government Local Transport Fund, Local Transport Network Fund and Active Travel Fund having secured £12.7million over the past three years; more than any other Local Authority in Wales. We have continued to support the development of efficient and integrated transport systems which develops the built and natural environment and encourages higher levels of physical activity.
- Active travel is one of our priorities in terms of enabling residents to choose alternative methods of transport to cars. The existing cycle network has been expanded to 118km to support the Active travel Act and we have created more sustainable travel networks between residential areas and centres of employment. Swansea Bayways is the name of Swansea Council's active travel campaign and Walk and Cycle Network. This platform has been developed for use by partners and citizens.



- Investment has taken place in safe cycling and walking routes with the creation of new cycle infrastructure and extension of existing routes. Examples of works include a walking route for school children travelling between West Cross and Bishop Gore Comprehensive made much safer with the introduction of crossing facilities at the junction of Mumbles Road and Mayals Road and the widening of the pavement across Loughor Bridge so it can carry cyclists. We have secured £12.7 million in Grant funding from Welsh Government over the last 3 years to improve our walking and cycling network. Our network has increased by 33% in the last 3 years. 60% of households now live within 500metres of an off road cycle route.

#### **Case Study: New Cycle Route for Swansea North**

**A new 1.4km off-road walking and cycle route between Gowerton and Kingsbridge provides an important link between the two communities in the north of Swansea,** linking up with the existing National Cycle Network Route 4 to offer onward travel to destinations all over Swansea Bay. This new route may provide an alternative suitable route to school children . This will be determined through an assessment process. Cllr Mark Thomas: Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure said "This is an ongoing process where we are always looking at where we can plan new routes and connect communities in the city. More and more people are choosing to cycle as an alternative transport method for getting to and from work or just for leisure purposes, so we need to make sure we have sufficient infrastructure in place." The work has been funded by a £625k transport grant funding secured from the Welsh Government. Highways & Transportation Officers are continuing their work to establish an east-west route on the north side of Swansea's urban conurbation, facilitating a continuous off-road route from Gowerton in the west to Birchgrove in the east, via Gorseinon and Morriston and Llansamlet.

- We have established a regional transport sub-committee under the Swansea Bay City Region which is developing a regional transport plan and proposals for the first phase of a Swansea Bay Metro project. It is expected that the establishment of Corporate Joint Committees across Wales will provide the governance structures and mandate to enable this Group to make good progress in the coming years.
- We have also been working with transport providers to develop an integrated smart transport infrastructure that supports growth and makes commuting easier for all, whichever mode of transport people choose to use. This aims to provide passengers with real time information that can be utilised via smart phones and roadside devices. Late bus technology has also being introduced which gives buses operating late, priority at signal controlled junctions. We have continued to invest in the telematics infrastructure which includes an integrated traffic management system. A new system enables technologies to link together CCTV monitoring, Journey time analysis, pollution monitoring and remote access to traffic signal installations. This technology has also delivered a significant annual saving compared to the previous system.
- Investment has taken place in renewing car park payment machines enabling contactless, cash and card payments supported by Automatic Number Plate Recognition technology. A £280,000 investment in upgrading facilities has meant Park and Ride sites at Landore and Fabian Way have benefitted from the improved ticketing options.
- We are continuing to install modern public transport infrastructure at key sites throughout the city. Residents having difficulty using digital services to transition to a new bus pass system were supported Contact Centre and Library staff.



- A first tranche of electric vehicle charging points has been installed in the past year. Charging bays have been installed in car parks across the City Centre to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles and contribute towards a reduction in carbon emissions from transport.

#### Swansea's Coastline / Blue Flag

- In 2019, Caswell, Langland and Port Eynon Bays were all awarded Blue Flag status along with Swansea Marina. Bathing Water Quality based on a prediction model was communicated by social media and public display board was generally 'Good'. Improvements to sand dune management have been made at Swansea Bay. Options to minimise sand movement from the Bay to the Promenade and adjacent highways will be evaluated in 2020. At Langland, an online registration system was launched to market beach hut which resulted in record applications. A consultative study has determined options for improvement works at Port Eynon Bay including toilets, car park and wider foreshore areas. An action plan is developing. Marina improvements include a petrol sale facility and new Boatyard Tourer Park.

#### Case Study: Changing Places at Caswell Bay

**Caswell Bay now benefits from new facilities to give more people access to its natural attractions. Its new Changing Places facility is the first of its kind on Gower.** It is specifically designed for people with profound physical or learning disabilities as well as other disabilities that severely limit mobility. It is run in partnership with Surfability UK, a community Interest Company based at Caswell. Robert Francis Davies, Cabinet Member for "The Council has a long-standing commitment to introducing Changing Places facilities and this joint effort is a great example of partnership working between the various council teams involved and Caswell businesses to add a major new asset to the community." The self-contained modular Changing Places unit - in the car park across the beach - is fitted with ceiling hoist, shower, changing bed and toilet to enable changing and washing in a clean and safe environment. Two free pre-bookable Mobi-chair floating wheelchairs are also available to allow disabled visitors access the water. The £85,000 improvement scheme was partly financed by the Welsh Government Rural Communities Rural Development Programme 2014-2020. This is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and Welsh Government. Tourism Amenity Investment Scheme (TAIS).

#### Strategic Housing and Mixed housing development sites

- The Council also has a clear ambition to deliver more affordable housing in Swansea. The More Homes Development Plan, which was agreed by Cabinet in February 2019, sets out short term plans to build 142 new council houses up to 2023. Beyond this, the Council has set a target to deliver 1000 new Council homes via the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), and a further 4000 affordable homes as part of its ambition to deliver more than 5000 new affordable homes over the period from 2021 to 2031. A major delivery route for affordable, energy efficient housing supply is via Swansea's four Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) who are zoned to develop in Swansea. A number of acquisitions of former Right to Buy homes has also taken place, and these homes have also been added to the council's stock. The council also supports a new cooperative housing policy.

#### Case study: Self-build homes

**The Council is taking part in a trial of Self Build Wales, a Welsh Government Scheme designed to increase the availability of suitable plots and eliminate many of the barriers that put people off.** We have identified 3 potential plots for a "plot shop" where local authorities identify potential plots



and then make them "oven ready" ensuring all planning and site requirements are in place before they are sold. The self-builder then chooses which home they wish to build from a pattern book supplied at the time of purchase. Successful applicants need to provide a deposit of 25% of the cost of the plot and the Development Bank of Wales provides a loan to cover the balance. Cllr Andrea Lewis said "Self-Build Wales addresses the barriers many people face to building their own homes which is why I am excited about its potential in Swansea. There are also wider community benefits such as bringing derelict land into use and supporting local small building companies and the employment opportunities this creates. There could be potential opportunity for future income generation for the council if this project is successful."

#### Evening & Night time economy (ENTE)

- The City Centre successfully retained its prestigious Purple Flag status for 2019/20. Our city is one of only two places in Wales that can fly the Purple Flag which highlights how visitors can expect an entertaining, diverse, safe and enjoyable night out whenever they come. This year's bid was led by the Council but reflected the depth and breadth of work undertaken by partners such as Swansea BID, South Wales Police and the local universities, among others, highlighted the patrols by street pastors who help identify and keep vulnerable people safe and remove hazards, the presence of new night-time rangers who work key evenings to deal with visitor queries, and the work of taxi marshals who help manage queues at night to ensure people get home safely. Other features include a medical Help Point and Drop Off Point both on The Strand, late-night bus services, a one way traffic trial on Wind Street, a spot-cleaning operation that fast tracks cleansing issues and a Drink Less Enjoy More multi-media campaign. A 'Best Bar None' Awards scheme has also been hosted in the city centre; this recognised some of the night-time business's operational practices that keep public safety front of mind at all times. Funding has also been secured to deliver the Reimagining Wind Street scheme and delivery is underway.

#### Regeneration

- The Regeneration Swansea partnership continues to meet monthly with strong private sector representation and senior colleagues from partner organisations. Regeneration Swansea acts as the local project board managing both the Welsh Government Targeted Regeneration Investment (TRI) and Town Centre Loan Fund. Swansea Council is a regional lead, and works with other South West Wales local authorities to deliver the Property Enhancement Development Grant and Sustainable Living Grant element of the TRI scheme. This funding prevents the long term decline of vacant buildings through grant support to refurbish and repurpose city centre and Morriston buildings. A Well-being matrix has been developed for the grant application process - all applicants must now show how their project will maximise well-being in Swansea.
- A Regeneration Morriston group are also meeting regularly with good cross sector representation. An action plan is being delivered including the piloting of a shopfront renewal scheme. A resilient heritage toolkit has been developed for the Morriston Tabernacle for use by similar chapels needing sustainable future.
- We have made good progress in securing external funding aiming to facilitate regeneration, support business and promote the city. The acquisition of the Palace Theatre is in the final stages and we are waiting for confirmation of funding from WEFO. In addition, we have submitted business cases for WEFO and Welsh Government Panel for Orchard House, Albert Hall and the former BHS building as part of the Building for the Future programme. Future plans include ensuring that projects meet all of the requirements for external funding and that there is



broad range of schemes of varying size with the best chance of success and link with foundation economy work.

- The Council's initial response to Coronavirus included the swift implementation of a support package for small business. The Council coordinated a year-long business rates holiday for small retail, leisure and hospitality businesses ensuring eligible businesses had their payment schedules adjusted accordingly. In addition, the council administered payments and carried out fraud prevention on Welsh Government Grants to eligible small business. This built on the Council's previous commitment to assist small 'high street' business through its accessing £2.3m of the Welsh Government rate relief scheme which helped approximately 1,300 eligible small businesses with their bills.
- Swansea High Street was shortlisted for the Great British High Street awards, as a Champion High Street. This celebrated the strong cultural and arts offering supplemented by technology and digital start up culture emanating from the Urban Village.

#### **Case Study: Breathing new life into the historic Palace Theatre**

**Swansea Council has worked with Welsh Government to identify funding to support the transformation of the Grade 2, wedge shaped structure.** The much-loved Palace Theatre building, which has been in private ownership for some time, has been left unused for more than a decade and has fallen into dilapidation. Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration and Tourism, said: "The architects and designers we've shown around are excited by the possibilities of the Palace. It's a remarkable building that, although terribly down-at-heel inside, is structurally sound. Cabinet has approved a plan to regenerate the building while protecting its famous facade for generations to come. This will consider a range of mixed uses for the site which once staged performances from Charlie Chaplin to Sir Anthony Hopkins. The proposals have been enthusiastically supported by the public who are feeding into an online campaign to uncover more of the site's heritage and reflect it within in the final plans. Council Leader, Rob Stewart said "Our proposals will not only save this architecturally-significant landmark for our city but also add to the revitalisation of the upper High Street area".

- Swansea Market won the much coveted title of Britain's Best Large Indoor Market in 2020 following a previous award achieved in 2015. This annual competition, which is run by the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA), acknowledged the Market's Lettings Strategy which secured 98% of stall occupancy. The judges also noted the Market's Improvement Plan to upgrade the Market as well as its innovative approach to marketing including the launch of a new look website and social media programme.

Protect and promote the health, wellbeing, safety and consumer interests

- Trading standards has continued to play its part in the national campaign 'Operation Sceptre' tackling knife crime in continuing to test for illegal knife sales. While an investigation into a Swansea based call centre saved millions being scammed from the public. Counterfeit clothing seized by the Trading Standards team continues to be repurposed rather than destroyed where possible. After branding is removed, clothing is redistributed to people who are homeless or vulnerable in Swansea via the 'Together at Christmas' volunteer run event and foodbanks.
- Successful prosecutions based on investigations of food sold past its sell by date and incorrectly labelled food have continued to demonstrate how the Food Safety protect the public. This year Environmental Health Officers worked to protect tenants from landlords who do not comply



with legislation designed to keep tenants safe. A successful prosecution sent a clear message from both the Courts and Council that enforcement action is taken to protect tenants from landlords who operate illegally.

#### **Case Study: Reducing traffic pollution**

**Council's Pollution Control Team has joined forces with Swansea University to look at the impact vehicle engines idling in traffic queues have on air quality.** The study was launched to coincide with Clean Air Day on 20 June 2019. It aims to gather evidence to understand if reducing engine idling will reduce pollution. Signs were placed on the roadside at a busy locations and motorists were asked by friendly signage to switch off their engines while waiting in traffic queues in order to improve air quality. Measurements of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) were then taken whilst displaying behavioural change messages on roadside signs over several weeks. During a three day pilot period in Sketty on a pedestrian route to a local school, the number of vehicles with engines switched off rose from 5% to 14% in the morning and rose from 16% to 27.6%. The aim is to publish findings in a peer reviewed journal and continue this work by implementing signage on a larger scale in other residential exposure areas of Swansea over a longer period of time. Mark Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure Management, said: "Vehicle related pollution is something we are keen to see reduced in the city. This latest initiative is part of much wider work we are doing to reduce carbon emissions in Swansea and improve air quality for residents".

#### **5. How this Well-being Objective is contributing to the achievement of the national well-being goals.**

- *A prosperous Wales* – Implementing the City Deal with partners to invest in digital infrastructure and support investment, innovation, growth, jobs, skills and productivity. Building sustainable development principles into the re-development of the city centre by incorporating requirements for resource efficiency (waste and energy), renewables, enhancing biodiversity / green infrastructure and the sustainable use of natural resources that support a productive and low carbon economy and adapt / mitigate for climate change. Maximising benefits from grant funding applications.
- *A Resilient Wales* – Promoting the 'Green Economy' including renewable energy to provide energy security, climate change mitigation and economic benefits. Promotion of green infrastructure methods in developments.
- *A Healthier Wales* – Promoting biodiversity and protecting Swansea's green spaces, including parks for recreation and play and to promote health and well-being. Managing Swansea's coastline and promoting improved water quality and Blue Flag status to encourage tourism, protect the environment and support well-being.
- *A more Equal Wales* – Creating employment and training opportunities for the long-term unemployed and economically inactive through community benefit clauses in Council contracts.
- *A Wales of Cohesive Communities* – Giving priority to providing affordable housing.
- *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language* – Improving, expanding and diversifying leisure, cultural and heritage facilities and infrastructure to help boost the economy, promote tourism and improve well-being.
- *A globally responsible Wales* – Building sustainable development principles into the redevelopment of the city centre particularly around resource efficiency and the sustainable use of natural resources contributes to a low carbon economy and adapt / mitigate for climate change. Encouraging grant applicants to adopt green infrastructure measures in building refurbishments.



## 6. Lessons learnt and areas for development

### Connecting City Deal with City Centre and Local Economy

- Innovative approaches to stimulating national and international investment in Swansea have been adopted via the 'Shaping Swansea' campaign. This uses Virtual Reality to engage a wider variety of stakeholders so that our future is developed by a broad partnership. This innovation will help us to creatively plan for Swansea's future pulling in additional resources and is likely to be increasingly valuable if there is longer term Coronavirus disruptions to business travel.
- Swansea Central Buckingham Group Meet the Buyer events have been supported by Business Wales to encourage local business to bid for small work packages. This approach is being built upon virtually to ensure that local businesses and individuals continue to have an opportunity to benefit from procurement activity.
- As the Council has now committed to deliver Swansea Central Phase 1 and are progressing the Digital Village that forms part of the City Deal programme, it is fundamental to ensure that we build on and use the catalytic effect of this investment to facilitate further regeneration of the city, delivering economic growth and creating a better place for people to live, work and visit in accordance with the Council's priorities and objectives, in particular the Swansea Central Area Framework (SCARF) and LDP. It is the Council's intention to minimise further public expenditure on future regeneration projects and therefore officers have been exploring how to attract private investment to ensure ongoing development of Council owned strategic development sites.
- Work has continued on the creation of new parkland next to Swansea's emerging indoor arena. It will be the first purpose designed park in the city since Victorian times, will be attractive to all ages and will support city living. Bigger than a football pitch, it will be inspired by Swansea's coastal landscape and will include natural play features. It will feature a food and drink venue plus public toilets. The parkland will have two levels of car parking beneath it and will help connect the city to the sea.

### Employment and Training Opportunities

- We are working with Regional Learning and Skills Partnership which has links with more than 1000 business across South West Wales to produce further insight into the skills that are needed by industry and the opportunities presented by the Swansea Bay City Deal. One of the key projects within the Swansea Bay City Deal is the Skills and Talent project which aims to deliver a regional solution for the identification and delivery of the skills and training requirements for all City Deal projects. Working alongside partners from the private sector, higher and further education, schools and the third sector, the project team is mapping out gaps in current provision and identifying the skills and training needed for students, teachers and lecturers both now and in future.

### The Tawe River Strategy and Hafod Copperworks

- The Economic Development and External Funding Team subscribes to an online grants database and continually monitors available grant and loan funding opportunities. There is a need for continued engagement with Welsh Government to influence the shape of tourism funding post-Brexit, and to explore partnership funding models where other organisations may be in a better position to bid for funding but with the backing and support of the Council. There is some



success already with this approach, e.g. Hafod Copperworks' Musgrave Engine House project working with Swansea University and Friends of Hafod-Morfa Copperworks.

### Sustainable Transport

- We have been selected by the Welsh Government as one of 5 pilot projects to examine how bus services can be improved through partnership working. The Council, First Cymru and TfW have bid for funding to investigate the feasibility of improvements to vehicles, timetables and infrastructure on a key bus corridor to produce significant modal shift as part of the Swansea Bay City Metro project.
- Traffic modelling trends suggest that if we do not make changes, in the future motorists will experience waiting times around four times longer than now at the Broadway Interchange in Sketty. Long term planning has resulted in a £1.1million investment replacing the two roundabout system with traffic signal controls so anticipated future growth that can't be offset by active travel on the route is managed.

### Swansea's Coastline/Blue Flags

- Hundreds of people and organisations responded to a consultation exercise in summer 2019 which invited sensitive development ideas and views for a number of coastline sites including land around the skate ramp and the Blackpill Lido. The responses are helping to shape plans for the sites moving forward, including decisions not to take forward development where this reflected the public response.
- Mumbles Coastal Defence Ground investigation studies to the promenade and foreshore, wave modelling and overtopping assessments have all been undertaken and reports concluded. A sustainable coastal defence is now planned for Mumbles to adapt to climate change. The project will work with stakeholders to continue to explore opportunities for wider additional and community benefits.

### Energy Strategy

- As part of the Council's commitment to innovative, energy efficient housing, a number of retrofit schemes testing new technologies were trialled in 2018/19, lessons were learnt from this work and were applied in 2019/20. These findings will continue to guide future work transforming inefficient housing stock into some of the most energy efficient homes.
- It is proposed that energy strategy will be developed towards managing the energy used by the buildings determined by the building fabric, the building services and the management of the building (including renewable options). There is scope to examine if some of the areas within the energy strategy at present relating to decarbonisation such as sustainable transport would be more appropriate in a different strategic or policy context.

### Regeneration

- Over the next year, the Regeneration Swansea partnership will continue to refine existing support mechanisms to influence and co-design future regeneration programmes. Future plans include the continuation of branding discussions and the development of 'shovel-ready' schemes to take advantage of and pursue funding opportunities as they arise.



- Longstanding issues with substance misuse and anti-social behaviour has created a negative perception of Swansea's High Street. Swansea Public Services Board formed a Critical Incident Group which brought together public services, third sector organisations, local business and residents in a bid to work collectively and tackle root causes of the problem running parallel with a programme of physical and community regeneration. This successful stakeholder involvement approach continues to be rolled out with a number of projects being taken forward.

#### City of Culture

- Our Events programme has grown in recent years and now attracts in excess of 0.5m people each year. Visitors to our Events add a significant boost to the local economy and this is estimated as being in the region of £20m each year. This means Events are a really important aspect of our Regeneration Strategy. Future Plans include a focus on sustainability issues around event management, including the development of an Events Sustainable Development Charter. A Review of the Destination Management Plan is due in the Autumn 2020 and the research work undertaken in 2019 and 2020 will help inform the review. All these plans will have greater significance and will evolve as the industry recovers from Lockdown and adapts to long term implications of social distancing.



## **Tackling Poverty**

### **1. Why this is a Well-being Objective?**

- We want a Swansea where having poverty of income is not a barrier to doing well at school, having a healthy and vibrant life, developing skills and qualifications and having a fulfilling occupation.
- We want to challenge inadequate access to necessary services of good quality by targeting resources where they have the most effect, with decisions about that made in conjunction with service users.
- We want all of our residents to have the opportunity and resources to join in with social, cultural and leisure activities and decision-making.
- We want people to maximise their income and get the most out of the money that they have.
- We want people to avoid paying the 'poverty premium', the extra costs people on low incomes must pay for essentials such as fuel and transport.
- We want to ensure removal of barriers to employment such as transport and childcare.
- We want to ensure inclusion of people from Swansea's most disadvantaged communities so that we reduce inequalities between and within communities.

### **2. The steps we said that we would take to meet this Well-being Objective.**

- Implement the revised Poverty Strategy to empower local people, change cultures to emphasise tackling poverty is everyone's business and target resources to maximise access to opportunity and prosperity.
- Work with our Health partners to ensure that, through our Early Years Strategy, children in their early years and at Foundation Phase achieve their expected language, emotional, social and cognitive development and are ready for learning and for school.
- Ensure that young people are able to access employment, education or training after reaching 16 years of age.
- Help to address the impacts of Welfare reform, such as supporting people to claim the full benefits they are entitled to so that they are able to maximise their income.
- Invest to improve housing and build more energy efficient Council homes and support the building of affordable housing to help meet housing need, reduce fuel bills, regenerate estates and bring wider economic and employment benefits.
- Prevent homelessness and support people to maintain their tenancies to help provide stability and security for families and communities in order to safeguard health and well-being and prevent social exclusion.
- Explore creating our own energy venture to provide low-cost energy to homes helping to tackle high domestic fuel bills and fuel poverty.
- Support tackling climate change and help eradicate fuel poverty and boost economic development through the ARBED scheme and energy efficiency measures in social housing.
- Support individuals to overcome their barriers to employment through co-ordinated person-centred employability support.
- Provide art, culture and heritage opportunities in order to boost skills, confidence, self-esteem and aspiration.
- Implement the Community Cohesion Delivery Plan to promote cohesive and inclusive communities in Swansea.



### **3. What success will look like.**

- Swansea has a corporate and comprehensive strategy to tackle poverty. Success will be judged by the success of work to help tackle, mitigate and help overcome the causes and effects of poverty. Success will mean: starting at an early age to help children meet their developmental milestones and giving young people opportunities for employment, work or training; mitigating the impacts of income poverty; preventing the causes of social exclusion, such as homelessness; helping to mitigate the effects of the so-called 'poverty premium' on housing, fuel and transport costs, and; helping to remove barriers to employment such as unaffordable childcare.

### **4. Progress taking steps to meet this Well-being Objective – what worked.**

#### **Tackling Poverty Strategy**

- Swansea's Tackling Poverty Strategy continues to support the premise that Tackling Poverty is everyone's business. Overall, good progress has been made in terms of implementing the objectives within the Delivery Plan and meeting the targets in the Corporate Plan. A review of performance shows that there has been an increase in the number of people gaining employment through Employability Support this year compared to the previous year. The number of adults gaining accredited qualifications exceeded the target and was also an improvement compared to the previous year. The total amount of benefits secured by the Welfare Rights Team during the appeals process was also significantly higher than what was expected and the team have continued to achieve a 94% success rate on all appeals. Although the time taken to process claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction has increased, this was largely due to the introduction of Universal Credit and more complex cases remaining in Housing Benefit rather than transferring to Universal Credit and Universal Credit being used for the Council Tax Reduction scheme. A review of the Tackling Poverty Strategy and Delivery Plan will take place in 2020/21. It is expected that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will have a detrimental effect on communities and people in Swansea, this needs to be understood fully and will influence Swansea's future Tackling Poverty Strategy.
- The Council's Internal Poverty Forum continues to meet monthly, aiming to align existing programmes and initiatives across the Council and integrate tackling poverty commitments into mainstream service delivery. This year the Forum has prioritised employability, financial inclusion and using data to target support to tackle poverty. One of the main benefits of the Council's Internal Poverty Forum has been the sharing of information and good practice facilitating new ways of working and opportunities to tackle poverty. For example, in order to offer a timely benefits check and money advice to local residents a sub group of the Forum have identified "life stages" or "bump points" at which people may be receptive to money advice such as the birth of a child, school transitions and bereavement. Subsequently they have clarified the offer, the referral process and identified relevant services such as Libraries, Registrars, Council Tax, Housing Benefit, Housing Options and Tenancy Support which can promote awareness of the support available to people as their circumstances change.
- The Swansea Poverty Partnership Forum and Financial Inclusion Steering group continue to meet quarterly. Key milestones have been achieved in establishing a Swansea Poverty Truth Commission: Funding for year 1 has been secured, SCVS has been selected as the host organisation and the facilitation team has been recruited. Swansea is one of four pilot areas in the UK, partnering with the Children's Society and wider services to improve crisis support. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the experiences of poverty in Swansea and the demand for services. This will influence the evolution of the strategy in the coming year.



One such aspect will be a focus on food poverty and food insecurity. A Swansea Food Poverty Network will be established in the wake of the crisis.

- The Council's Poverty Forum collaborates with the Swansea Partnership Poverty Forum, ensuring agendas are aligned. The Poverty Reduction Policy Development Committee (PDC) has considered the recommendations of the Scrutiny Inquiry into Tackling Poverty (2018) and developed policy recommendations to strengthen the Council's approach to tackling poverty. Policy recommendations developed by the Poverty Reduction Policy Development Committee have included an Affordable Credit Policy and a Corporate Debt Policy. Work is ongoing in relation to policy recommendations about how the Council communicates with and supports residents with rent arrears, Council tax arrears and other debts and a Green Fairness policy, which aims to ensure that people living in deprived communities have more equitable access to the benefits of the natural environment.

### Early Years Strategy

- The Council have continued to develop and strengthen its Early Years strategy through Families First, the Flying Start Programme, the Foundation Phase, the Best Start Campaign, Jig-so and a range of other activities to support children, parents and their families. Working with Health and other Partners the Council's approach has incorporated targeted interventions for children living in relatively high areas of deprivation, children with emerging additional needs and universal provision for children and their parents across Swansea.
- During 2019/20, the Families First programme supported 12,278 individuals with a range of targeted interventions aiming to prevent emerging needs from escalating and providing support for more complex needs. The Families First programme funded a number of disability related projects including support for families with preschool children who have an emerging or diagnosed disability, holistic family support and an advocacy service centred around Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and education, life skills and family support for young people with very challenging behaviour and high end disability and Early Language Development.
- The Flying Start programme continued to provide the Best Start in life for children in their early years in the most deprived communities. During 2019/20, a total of 2886 children aged 0-3 benefitted from the Flying Start. The continuation of the integrated Jig-so project has also provided support to vulnerable young families from conception and during their child's early years. The project aims to fill the gaps between statutory services across sectors with a team of midwives, community nursery nurses, family facilitators and language development workers offering support to all young parents up to 18 and vulnerable parents aged 19-24. Significant progress has been made in respect of hosting the 1,000 days event together with further collaboration in terms of an integrated Early Years Programme via the Welsh Government Pathfinder agenda.
- The Best Start campaign has continued to maintain a presence on social media and at various events across Swansea throughout 2019/20. Best Start Swansea promoted the SKIP physical activity work at the annual Teddy Bears picnic event at the Waterfront Museum, with over 2000 people in attendance. The event offered parents a chance to see the importance of developmental movement play that the programme promotes. Following on from our first successful outdoor event, the Best Start Buggy Push, which took place in May 2018, we followed this up with another event in October 2019. This took place at the civic centre and our main focus was the promotion of balance bikes and the benefits of these to the physical development of young children. The Best Start social media accounts continue to progress and to make good



links with national campaigns, such as the Every Child Wales campaign, retweeting the positive parenting messages. The Facebook and Twitter accounts have over 500 followers and reached an estimated 200,000 people. The development of a clear programme for promoting the messages in 2020/21 is one of our priorities moving forward, along with the development of more video content to support the online message campaign. This will coincide with a redevelopment of the supporting Best Start Swansea website.

- The SKIP Meithrin programme has been strengthened with its inclusion into the action plan for delivery of the Early Years Pathfinder work. To support greater rollout, the Pathfinder pilot has purchased equipment for a further 50 settings to access the developmental movement play programme in 2020/21. This is also a regional project, as the Pathfinder programme spans Neath Port Talbot as well. This programme is being supported by the University of Wales Trinity St David. The Pathfinder work has gathered pace during 2019/20. There are two main strands, the first is a mapping exercise that is looking at all services that interact with families from conception to 7 years old across 4 areas of work. These are Health, Learning, Family Support and finally Childcare and Play. There have been two well attended mapping workshops in December 2019 and February 2020. 2019/20 has also seen development of a pilot programme that will look at supporting early identification of speech and language delay in the non-maintained sector. The proposal is considering ways on how to replicate a Flying Start approach to the identification of Speech and Language delay and subsequent support in non-Flying Start childcare settings. The pilot will focus initially in the Llŵchwr GP Cluster area.

#### Childcare

- Swansea Council began testing the 30 Hour Funded Childcare Offer in July 2017 within selected wards of Swansea. During this period of testing Swansea Council worked with the Welsh Government, parents and childcare providers to test certain approaches, policy thinking and assumptions in order to learn and inform and shape the final Childcare Offer. The Welsh Government has committed to providing 30 hours of government-funded early education and childcare for 3 year old children of eligible working parents for up to 48 weeks of the year.
- From January 2018 the Childcare Offer was widened to families across the whole of Swansea. The offer is available to parents who are employed, self-employed or on a zero hours contract and earn on average, a weekly minimum equivalent of 16 hours at national minimum wage or national living wage. A child can receive the offer the term following their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, until they are offered an education place – usually the September after their fourth birthday. Over 700 hundred families have been approved as eligible to take up the 'Offer' from the summer term 2019 up until the end of the autumn term 2019. We can estimate that over 180 childcare in addition were approved for the 'Offer' ready to commence from the Spring term 2020. We have over 150 registered, Care Inspectorate of Wales (CIW) childcare settings delivering funded childcare places this includes full day care, childminders, sessional and out of school care provision.

Ensure that young people are able to access employment, education or training after reaching 16 years of age (Identify the key person for NEETs update)

- Robust multi-agency monitoring and tracking continues to take place under the Council's Youth Progression & Engagement Plan. Swansea's Keeping in Touch Strategy and the implementation of the Welsh Government's Engagement and Progression Framework has supported the Council and its partners' good progress in reducing the numbers of NEET (not in employment, education or training) young people at 16-18 years. This work has supported a downward trend in the



proportion of Year 11 school leavers who were NEET across Wales between 2008 and 2015. The NEET rate for Year 11 school leavers has fallen from 5.8% in 2008 to 2.7% in 2015 and 2.1% in 2016. There was slight rise in 2017 (2.2%) and 2018 (2.5%). There is an anticipated reduction in 2019 to 2%, the lowest ever in Swansea (WG 2019 Destination Survey publication due 22nd July). Young people who are most at risk of becoming NEET are identified and provided with the personal support they require to remain engaged with education, employment and training. Regular meetings take place between, schools, careers, preventative services and partner organisations to regularly track those at risk during year 11.

- The estimated 0.5% reduction in the Year 11 school leaver NEET rate in 2019 demonstrates the progress made in this area over the last three years. However, analysis has shown that 80% - (181 of 226, July 19) of this group are either 'not available' or 'not ready' to enter employment or training. This is due to the complex needs of a core group of NEETs and require specialist support to get them ready to enter employment or training. Specific barriers to employment or training identified have included: social and health factors (e.g. drugs and alcohol, mental health, behavioural and emotional, lack of parental support, confidence and motivation); skills-related factors (e.g. Additional Learning Needs, employability, work experience, training, qualifications); and wider factors (e.g. housing, transport, childcare, money for work related items).
- Support for young people who are already NEET, or at the greatest risk of becoming NEET has been provided by Cynnydd (a regional project for young people aged 11-24 yrs at greatest risk of becoming NEET), the Council's Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) Strategy, Cam Nesa (a regional engagement, learning and training programme for young people aged 16-24 yrs), Communities for Work and Swansea Working. Swansea's allocation of Cam Nesa funding has supported the expansion of the Post-16 lead work team within our Integrated Family Services and Young People section. This team has worked intensively with young people and their families to develop individual well-being and NEET focussed plans, supporting them to overcome complex barriers that can prevent their progress.
- It is anticipated that both the COVID-19 scenario and Brexit will have a significant impact on this area of work over the coming year and beyond. The European Social Fund currently funds a large proportion of work for this cohort of young people and it is not clear what future funding post-Brexit will look like. The COVID-19 situation is likely to create a significant challenge for youth employment, which may create a disproportionate impact on this cohort through potential economic recession.

#### Welfare Rights and steps taken to address Welfare Reform

- The Welfare Rights Team have continued to increase awareness and knowledge of welfare rights in Swansea by delivering training to staff, providing an advice line, representation at appeals, complex casework, producing publications and self-help guides and policy work. During 2019/20 the Welfare Rights Training Programme delivered training to 262 participants and provided an advice line three days a week. During 2019/20 the Team represented 78 people at appeals (74 were successful), provided advice in relation 881 enquiries and raised £1,416,282.43 overall.
- The work of the Welfare Rights Team continues to influence at both national and local levels; for example the team identified processing errors in the Department for Work and Pensions computer systems managing legacy benefits for mixed aged couples. As a consequence of their involvement the DWP have rectified these problems, which will affect claimants nationally. The team have also been working with the Revenue and Benefits Section in identifying and securing entitlement to legacy benefits for mixed aged couples who would have otherwise been



transferred over to Universal Credit. The Tenancy Support Unit have also continued to provide support for their clients to access additional grants, reduce rent arrears and manage housing benefit and Council tax debt through Rents surgeries.

### **Case Study: Utilising data to target support**

**The Tackling Poverty Service has worked in collaboration with departments across the Council to target various specific cohorts of people, families and households that could benefit from information and offers of specific support relating to their circumstances as identified in the Single Housing Benefits Extract Data set.** The Single Housing Benefits Extract (SHBE) managed by the Revenues and Benefits section, contains data on low income households in Swansea, specifically those that claim Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction. Working with the Revenues and Benefits Section along with other services such as the Welfare Rights Team, Employability and the Family Resources Services. Various cohorts were identified and written to with information, advice and offers of support.

#### **Pension Credit Example**

Prior to changes being made by central Government to Universal Credit and Pension Credits that would mean that mixed age couples could potentially lose out on income. The mixed age couple cohort was written to with advice about claiming Pension Credits prior to the implementation of changes being introduced by central Government. 192 mixed age couples were identified and written to explaining the changes with an offer of support and advice from the Welfare Rights Team.

#### **Lone Parent Example**

It was identified that an early offer of Employability Support to lone parents prior to the child turning 5 could help them to prepare for employment / return to employment before a reduction in their benefit entitlement. 208 letters were sent to lone parents whose youngest child was 3/4 years old to provide the information about changes to entitlement when their youngest child turns 5 and to offer employability support.

#### **Child Care Offer Example**

The SHBE data could be used to identify low income households that would be eligible for the Welsh Government's Child Care Offer. An initial 189 households were written to in August 2019 followed by a further 133 in December 2019 with information about the childcare offer and how to take it up in Swansea.

### **Energy Efficient Council homes**

- During 2019/20 we have continued to develop "Homes as Power Stations" at Parc Yr Helyg – Birchgrove and Colliers Way with the installation of innovative renewable technologies such as integrated solar roofs with battery storage and ground source heat pumps. The properties do not have a traditional gas supply but generate, store and then release their own electricity; this helps to reduce energy demand thus contributing to our decarbonisation reduction targets, as well as benefiting tenants with lower energy costs. Building the first new Council houses in Swansea to a super-energy-efficient "Swansea Standard" has also enabled all components to be procured locally and reduces emissions using solar battery storage and air source heat pumps.
- We have also worked with the Welsh School of Architecture to retrofit 6 homes at Ffordd Ellen, Craig Cefn Parc. Improvements have included external wall insulation, ground source heat pumps (GSHP), PV solar roofs and battery storage. Work has almost been completed on the project, which has included the drilling of bore holes for the GSHP; the PV solar panels have



been fitted to all the roofs and the installation of the Tesla storage batteries. We are also participating in the Welsh Government supported Re:fit Low Carbon Programme in order to implement energy efficiency saving opportunities in non-domestic buildings. A £1.3 million interest free loan has been secured from Welsh Government Wales Funding Programme (Salix) to deliver a Re:fit Cymru (Energy Efficiency) Phase 1 project comprising over 18 buildings which is projected to save an estimated 400 tCO<sub>2</sub>e every year.

- We have continued to invest in the improvement of our Council houses to ensure that they meet the Welsh Quality Housing Standards (WHQS) and have undertaken improvement works to 1000s of our homes in relation to roofing, windows, external doors, kitchens, bathrooms, heating/boilers, rewiring, smoke alarms and external facilities/gardens. During 2019/20 we have invested more than £117 million in order to ensure that all our Council homes meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standards by December 2020. A recent report by the Wales Audit Office (WAO) concluded that the Council was well placed to meet the WHQS requirements by December 2020.

### **Case Study: Retro-fitting Council-Owned Homes to make them Energy Efficient**

**Modern energy-saving technology is being installed at a row of six council-owned bungalows in a Swansea community, in a bid to lower energy bills for tenants.** The six homes are on the edge of the Craig Cefn Parc community, near Clydach and, until now, have used LPG, oil and electricity to heat their homes, including heating and hot water. Swansea Council has teamed up with Cardiff University's Welsh School of Architecture to trial a 'Homes as Power Stations' project, utilising greener power sources at each property. The 'retrofit' scheme which has been underway for the last 18 months combines traditional refurbishment work with new technology, transforming them into some of the most modern, comfortable and cheap to run homes in the city. When completed, each of the bungalows will be fitted with solar panel roofs that generate electricity. This electricity will be stored in a battery at the home and used to power appliances. Ground source heating technology is also being used to at the homes to help keep the properties warm and provide hot water.

Alongside the installation of low energy technology, the Council is also carrying out more traditional refurbishment work which includes renewing roofs, and installing external wall insulation to reduce heat loss. New windows and doors are also being fitted at the properties.

Andrea Lewis, Cabinet Member for Homes and Energy, said: "Because of the absence of a gas supply to these properties, they have been reliant on expensive methods of energy to heat the homes including electricity, oil and LPG gas. This has led to extremely high energy bills over the years. This makes these properties ideal for trialling more modern methods of energy efficient technology. Working closely with the Welsh School of Architecture, we are converting each of the bungalows into 'Homes as Power Stations' meaning they will generate their own energy from a variety of sources. The more traditional refurbishment work the Council is carrying out will also mean the homes will also be warmer, leading to significantly lower energy bills for the tenants."

Dr Joanne Patterson, Senior Research Fellow at the Welsh School of Architecture, who is leading the project for Cardiff University said: "This is a fantastic opportunity for all staff involved in the long term maintenance of existing homes at Swansea Council to learn about new technologies available to reduce energy use in homes and to understand how those involved in the building sector need to work together with the householders to provide comfortable and environmentally friendly homes."

The cost of the modern, environmentally-friendly technology is funded from a £2.5 million grant at the Welsh School of Architecture at Cardiff University to take forward affordable low carbon technologies in the built environment in Wales. The investment is part of a £26 million EU funded project - SPECIFIC, which is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the Welsh Government, and also by InnovateUK and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC).



## Prevent homelessness and support people to maintain their tenancies

- Swansea has a four-year Homelessness Strategy in place (2018-22). The Strategy is a key part of the Council's approach to tackling poverty through the prevention of homelessness by ensuring that the services and support in place for those at risk of, or are experiencing homelessness, are as effective and accessible as possible. The Council delivers its Homelessness Service primarily through Housing Options its housing advice service, which provides advice and information including: homelessness, access to temporary accommodation for qualifying households, applying for council housing, renting privately, debt/money advice, access to housing association accommodation, accommodation for people with disabilities and specialists services in areas such as ex-offenders and refugees. The service identifies support needs and refers to the Council's Tenancy Support Unit (TSU) to ensure vulnerable households are able to maintain their tenancies. The Housing Options service works closely in partnership with key organisations such as Health, the Voluntary Sector, the Prison Service and the Supporting People Team to deliver the Homelessness Strategy objectives.
- Swansea's Homelessness Strategy sets out clear objectives including: preventing homelessness; ensuring that accommodation and support is available to those who become homeless; providing robust responses to support people who are street homeless and eliminating the need to sleep rough. The strategy contains a wide range of actions to support these objectives; however, the increased demand and pressures on services due to the COVID19 pandemic requires an up-scaling and speeding up of the actions and activities that the Council has already committed to. The pandemic has had a substantial impact on homelessness in Swansea and Homelessness and Tenancy Support services have had to quickly adapt to the new circumstances to ensure that vulnerable people continue to get the help and support that they need.
- As part of this, the Welsh Government produced additional guidance in relation to homelessness legislation during March 2020, which confirms that anyone who is sleeping rough, or who is under threat of having to do so, is vulnerable and at greater risk of harm and must therefore be provided with temporary accommodation. This has led to a significant increase in the number of people who are in temporary accommodation and created an urgent need to speed up the move on process into permanent accommodation. The Council's aim is to ensure that everyone brought into temporary accommodation is moved on into permanent accommodation as soon as possible with appropriate support. There is also strong evidence to suggest that pressure on homelessness services will significantly rise in coming months as a result of the pandemic. Therefore, the challenge for the Council will be to maintain high levels of homelessness prevention whilst at the same time dealing with increasing numbers of homelessness presentations and increased households in need of temporary accommodation
- The Council has continued to provide a range of services to prevent homelessness and support people to maintain their tenancies. Housing Options is the Council's housing advice service, which provides free advice and information including: homelessness, access to temporary accommodation for qualifying households, applying for council housing, renting privately, debt/money advice, access to housing association accommodation and specialised accommodation for people with disabilities. The service identifies support needs and refers to the Tenancy Support Unit to ensure vulnerable households are able to maintain their tenancies. The Homeless Service is provided by a team of homelessness officers, plus specialists in areas such as money advice, ex-offenders and refugees. Services for young people are provided through a collaborative partnership between the Council and Barnardo's who provide the service to young people aged 16 – 20 who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. In 2019/20, 72.3% of households threatened with homelessness were successfully prevented by



the Council from becoming homeless compared to 75.45% in 2018/19. In addition, the average number of days' homeless families with children spend time in Bed & Breakfast accommodation remained static at 4.6 days in 2019/20.

- Support is provided to households to maintain their tenancy via the Tenancy Support Unit (TSU). The TSU delivers housing related support to vulnerable people living in Swansea funded by the Supporting People Programme Grant. The TSU in-house team provide a central referral and assessment gateway for the vast majority of floating support services in Swansea. Partner agencies provide support to specific client groups such as young people, older people, domestic abuse, mental health, families and single people. The TSU is also the Council's in-house support provider and provides a floating support service to all residents including tenants of Registered Social Landlord (housing associations), local authority or private landlords and owner occupiers.
- In 2019/20 the TSU supported 87% to manage and sustain their tenancies, which minimises possession actions and evictions. 81% of people supported by the TSU who were threatened with homelessness had their homelessness prevented

#### **Case Study: Ty Tom Jones**

**In direct response to the current COVID19 situation the Council and its partners – Pobl Housing Association and homelessness charities The Wallich and Caer Las worked in partnership to establish a new project, Ty Tom Jones, to provide additional temporary accommodation for homeless, vulnerable people during the pandemic.** It was urgently required in order to ease the immediate pressure in existing provision and reduce use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation by providing more suitable supported, temporary accommodation for the coming months. The work to bring the project online was completed in a remarkably short space of time due to the dedication and commitment of the organisations involved, plus the additional emergency COVID funding made available by Welsh Government. The building is owned by Pobl, who carried out the refurbishments, and The Wallich and Caer Las homelessness charities are delivering specialist support for the residents, including access to medical care, harm reduction support, counselling, budgeting and advice to help them with their mental and physical wellbeing and to help them to move onto permanent accommodation and break the cycle of homelessness.

#### **Case Study: Food Poverty**

**The Council have supported groups tackling food poverty with funding from the Welsh Government's Tackling Food Poverty and Addressing Food Insecurity EU Transition Funding.** 26 grants were awarded to groups who help to tackle food poverty and address food insecurity in Swansea which covered equipment, training, workshops, premises improvements and supplies. Among the schemes to receive funding is the Swansea Community Fridge project which redistributes surplus food from a variety of sources, including supermarkets, restaurants and domestic contributors. Run by the charity Caer Las, the scheme also helps to reduce food waste across the city, while benefiting the wider community. The funding also helped to develop an outreach service and mobile pop-up provision and developing information systems through an app to help target areas of greatest demand. Matt's Café and Swansea Night Shelter were also helped to purchase extra equipment including commercial fridges. Sketty HOP Foodbank and Pontarddulais Partnership have also been able to develop their services with the Council's support. Funding was also awarded to St. Mary's Church which provides a free breakfast every Tuesday and opens up its facilities to the homeless. Unity in Diversity, which runs weekly sessions for asylum seekers and refugees, has also received funding for a fridge and supplies. As a direct result of this funding, plans are being made to establish a Swansea Food Poverty Network that will seek to support a collaborative approach to



supporting those experiencing or at risk of food poverty across the city. Cllr Alyson Pugh, Swansea Council Cabinet Member for Better Communities, said: "Swansea Council is committed to reducing poverty and the impacts that poverty has upon residents. These grants have helped to support our partners in continuing and expanding the vital services that they provide ...there are some wonderful examples in Swansea of innovative schemes that help people in their time of need .... we are very keen to play our part in supporting charities and organisations who work to tackle food poverty and address food insecurity in Swansea."

#### Explore developing an Energy venture

- The Council has continued to explore establishing an energy company to manage the new energy generating facilities across the Authority and to ensure the taxpayers of Swansea receive the benefits of income from energy generated. The Council's approach to energy is now linked with emerging Tidal Lagoon project – Dragon Island. Although the UK Government concluded that the proposal for Swansea's Tidal Lagoon did not meet the necessary value for money criteria to secure subsidy support in 2018 - despite the publication of the independent Hendy Review 2017 which supported the of the project in Swansea – we have remained committed to the building the world's first purpose built tidal energy lagoon. Through the Swansea Bay City Deal region we have established a Tidal Lagoon Task Force which reviewed the proposal. The re-imagined concept of an Integrated Dragon Island incorporates the development of a Tidal Lagoon and a large floating development of commercial and residential accommodation. It is envisaged that the proposal will be facilitated through the procurement of a private sector partner as a joint venture which will remove the need for a large government subsidy. The revised proposal demonstrates a significant improvement to the business case and delivery mechanism including a 30% reduction in capital cost, reduced financing charges, underpinning Public sector Power Purchase agreements and a broader scope including solar, wind and data storage. The formation of the Western Gateway is also committed to inward investment and regeneration of South Wales and Western England and we have agreed to take the lead on one of core strands in its energy strategy.

#### Arbed and energy efficiency measures in private sector and social housing

- The Council continues to improve properties to tackle fuel poverty and improve the wellbeing of individuals through forums such as Swansea Environmental Forum & Low Carbon Swansea and by submitting appropriate Arbed bids. Energy efficiency measures were incorporated into the Sandfields Housing Renewal Area Scheme, a 5-year programme of private sector housing improvements with elevated levels of social deprivation, poor housing conditions and high levels of fuel poverty. The scheme was delivered by Welsh Government project managers and completed in June 2019. Future meetings are arranged with Arbed am Byth project managers to identify further suitable areas to submit bids for energy efficiency funding within the programme. In addition, the Council has continued to improve its Council housing stock through enveloping, boiler replacement, heating controls, loft insulation in order to contribute towards tackling fuel poverty and improving the environment.

#### Private sector housing conditions improvements

- The Council continue to fund private sector housing improvements through the provision of housing repair loans for elderly, disabled and low income households to remove hazards and carry out thermal improvements. A robust performance management system is in place to ensure waiting times for housing adaptations are monitored and kept to a minimum. Waiting times are measured from initial customer contact to completion of works. The result of a review



of the Disabled Facilities Grant process were implemented and a number of changes aimed at reducing waiting times were implemented. This included, for example, a telephone based initial enquiry and screening process which helped ensure DFGs are offered within statutory timescales. Waiting times were reduced in 2018/19 for Disabled Facilities Grants to 235 days, compared to 340 days in 2015-16. In total, 367 Disabled Facilities Grants, 543 Council House Adaptations and 734 Minor Adaptation Grants were delivered. Future plans aim to further reduce waiting times and introduce best practice from the Wales Audit Office Review.

### Empty Properties

- The Council has continued to bring empty properties back into use through provision of Welsh Government landlord loans, increasing the numbers of affordable housing units. By the end of 2018/19, 60 empty properties had received Welsh Government funded Landlord loans, creating 104 units of accommodation. We aim to continue the provision of loan assistance to help owners bring empty properties back into use, using recycled funds from repayment of previous landlord loan funds.

Support individuals to overcome their barriers to employment through co-ordinated person-centred employability support.

- The Council has continued to support individuals to overcome barriers to employment by providing individually tailored support delivered through multiple funding streams including Communities for Work, Communities for Work Plus, Workways Plus and Cam Nesa. Swansea Working is the overarching employability approach of Swansea Council and our key partners. The aim of the approach is to simplify access to support for local people of working age who are out of work or 'under employed', giving them one place to call and support tailored to their individual needs. The approach 'hides the wiring' of multiple funding streams and approaches, including the programmes mentioned above. Swansea Working makes it easy to get in touch and enables employability support for those who need it, when and where they need it in Swansea.
- Swansea Working has delivered 60 training courses/upskilling opportunities. Programmes within Swansea Working have provided close to 900 vacancies in the hidden job market for participants to access. Sector specific, participant engagement, information events and discovery events have taken place focusing on financial inclusion and welfare benefit support. Swansea Working delivered the following initiatives: Prisoner Leaver initiative, Care Leaver initiative, NHS Work Placement initiative and the Vulnerable Women into Employment initiative. Over 50 new partnerships have been developed in addition to many existing partnerships to support citizens in numerous aspects of employability support. 2112 referrals were received through the Swansea Working referral system from April 2019 to March 2020. This resulted in over 354 job outcomes and 335 achieving accredited training. The extent of collaborative working is evidenced through 49 partners receiving referrals into the system.

### **Case Study: Positive Feedback from a Citizen of Swansea about the Swansea Working Service**

"I am a 37yr old father of 3 and have always been a hard working guy. After a few knocks in life I lost my way outside of work, and I ended up in HMP Swansea, where I really felt lost, I lost a lot because of it. I thought that there was no hope. Then I heard of a group of people who was going to come and visit the prison once a week and help the inmates find work, there was nothing I wanted more than to hit the ground running. There I met Swansea Working and Communities for Work Plus. A very friendly, welcoming and enthusiastic team. I felt there was hope again for the first time in a long time after spending just one session with the team. Within a week, they got back to me on what was



available on my release date. I was spoilt for choice. I had a few chats with employers that the team had arranged and was given a few options. I chose one that would employ me on the 9th of Dec, my release date the 6th Dec. I hit the ground running thanks to the team. Then the day I was employed in prison thanks to the team, I was told I had a 1 bedroom flat waiting for me on release, and it wasn't by coincidence, it was because of the progress from the team I'd been working with. It didn't end there, Swansea Working met me across the road from the prison on my release, they took me to get a uniform for my new job and path in life, they arranged to have a removals van to pick me up everything I needed to start me off in my new flat, they even gifted me a couple of books as he knew I liked to read. Lorraine part of the Communities for Work Plus team helped me with bus tickets to get me through to my first pay day, food hampers and then Lorraine met me at the DVLA to help me get my driving licence back, which was done like everything else with this team, in no time and a happy to help. The aftercare from this team is amazing. I know if I ever needed advice or help, I could turn to them. I will always be grateful and feeling blessed that I met this team, Tim, Lorraine, Nigel, and Brian. Thank you so much for helping me get back on track in life."

Providing art, culture and heritage opportunities in order to boost skills, confidence, self-esteem and aspiration.

- The Council have continued to offer learning programmes with schools and low cost / free extra-curricular family focused work in community facilities and at arts and museum venues. Our learning programmes have continued in 2019/2020 with activities for key targeted and core community groups and individuals working with a network of organisations that target those living within areas of deprivation, through the Swansea Creative Learning Partnership and with Fusion funded post of Community Cultural Coordinator. Our targeted programmes and resources for 2019/2020 included:
  - Art Babas Pre-school & Early years children aged 0 to 3 and families.
  - Young Art Force Young NEETS (not in education, employment to training), Home schooled and cared for children aged 11 -16 offering Arts Award accreditation.
  - Associate Artist scheme as part of our ACW Taking Part Grant. The 3 artist/educators are working with many young people through partnerships with Good Vibes at the YMCA (young LGBTQ+ people), EYST Wales (Ethnic Youth Support Team) and many other local charities and groups.
  - Wednesday Adult Workshops (55+) Regular art classes for older and isolated people.
  - Welcome group - Refugee's and Asylum Seekers working in consultation with Swansea City of Sanctuary and Swansea Voluntary Service to provide opportunities for practical art sessions and volunteering.
  - Alternative Art School Adults with additional and special needs in partnership with Swansea Day Service centres.
  - RNIB art class Monthly art classes for adults with visual impairments..
  - Gwanwyn Festival Worked with Gwanwyn Festival on an intergenerational/ cross community Festival day – to celebrate creativity in older age.
  - Sensory Art Backpacks Our Gallery trails and backpacks include sensory toys and resources for visitors with autism to engage with the exhibitions and collections.
  - Family Film Club Autism friendly film screenings took place throughout the year every Sunday and holiday.
  - Training with Engage Cymru Dementia Awareness training for Arts professionals, Dementia audit for the Gallery.
  - Additional film screening Ad hoc screenings for BAME women, LGBTQ+, adults and young people.



- We have continued to encourage and support volunteering opportunities at Swansea Museum. This provides opportunity to socialise whilst developing new skill and knowledge. Total volunteer hours at the museum in 2019/20 totalled 3593 hours. Outreach is delivered with talks throughout Swansea with 1512 attendees in 30 outreach talks though year. 2020 talks have included groups such as hard of Hearing at Swansea Library, Wide Horizons Women's Group, Montana Park Community Centre, Norton Lodge and St John's Day Centres. A further round of films is currently being developed. Staff have also created mini 'vlogs' on their favourite museum items, all of which has created a new dialogue with audiences.

Implement the Community Cohesion Delivery Plan to promote cohesive and inclusive communities in Swansea.

- We have continued to implement the Welsh Government Community Cohesion programme during 2019/20. One of the key areas of work we have undertaken is identifying and mitigating community tensions (hate crime, extremism, anxiety, anti-social behaviour) relating to Brexit. We have established a Brexit Steering Group, which consists of Officers from across the Council and the Leader of the Council chairs the group. The Leader of the Council also leads for WLGA on Europe. We are continuing to work closely with the WLGA and Welsh Government to ensure there is a collective and consistent approach across Welsh local government in responding to Brexit.
- We hosted an open event for EU citizens living in Swansea to learn about what Brexit will mean for them and have a chance to ask questions. The Council has also developed a Brexit webpage on the Swansea Council website link here signposting to a number of useful websites that have been set up by the Welsh Government and the UK Government to provide useful, official information about Brexit. We have also undertaken a Community Cohesion (Brexit) survey across the Western Bay to develop the evidence base and to better assess the impact of Brexit. A Welsh Government funded Community Cohesion Officer has been appointed – part of the role is to identify any community tensions that may arise as a result of Brexit and to coordinate a multi-agency response in developing solutions. The Community Cohesion Officer has established a forum of young people to participate in a School Swap project across the Western Bay region to learn about themselves and others of different backgrounds, cultures, faiths and communities and to provide safe opportunities for facilitated discussions around issues of community cohesion.
- We have also undertaken a number of other activities to promote community cohesion in Swansea and across the Western Bay region, including the promotion and participation in Mosque open days, working with Swansea Interfaith Forum as part of their awareness raising week in November 2019, supporting EYST's BAME Forum and LGBT+ and the annual Swansea Pride event. We supported the annual Eid Festival, which was held in Singleton Park and attended by more than 3,000 people. We are also continuing to work closely with South Wales Police, Swansea University and the Health Board to participate in staff training and promote social, cultural, religious and sporting events such as the Community Cohesion netball cup to promote community cohesion in our communities

## **5. How this Well-being Objective is contributing to the achievement of the national well-being goals.**

- *A Prosperous Wales* – Maximizing benefit take up and entitlement and providing a single gateway to employment support.



- *A Resilient Wales* – Build more energy efficient Council homes and affordable housing to meet housing need, reduce fuel bills, regenerate estates and bring wide environmental, economic and employment benefits.
- *A Healthier Wales* – Providing free or low cost art, cultural and heritage events at targeted communities through a wide range of talks, workshops and activities aiming to address health and wellbeing.
- *A more Equal Wales* – Creating employment and training opportunities for the long-term unemployed and economically inactive through community benefit clauses in Council contracts.
- *A Wales of Cohesive Communities* – Implementing the Community Cohesion Delivery Plan to promote cohesive and inclusive communities in Swansea.
- *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language* – Helping Swansea's poorest communities tackle poverty by accessing arts, culture and heritage in order to boost skills, confidence, self-esteem and aspiration.
- *A globally responsible Wales* – Measures contributing to tackling climate change including energy efficiency measures in housing and building more energy efficient Council housing.

## 6. Lessons Learnt and areas for development

- The Council has made significant progress meeting its well-being objective but lessons have been learnt and there are areas for further development.

### Poverty Strategy

- Sustained and focused work is required to ensure a one-Council approach to tackling poverty and cross- departmental recognition to the approach that tackling poverty is 'everybody's business'. It is anticipated that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will have a significant impact on our work to tackle poverty with more new groups of people at risk of poverty and who have previously not been risk.

Ensure that young people are able to access employment, education or training after reaching 16 years of age

- Cuts in Welsh Government post-16 funding and uncertainty around the replacement of European funding continues to undermine the future sustainability of the breadth of 'offer' to learners. In addition, more individually tailored support is required to address the needs a core group of NEETS with complex needs. Emerging evidence from the impact of COVID-19 suggests young people will be particularly vulnerable to unemployment.

### Welfare Rights

- Research has shown that recent changes in welfare policy will result in increasing number of households being adversely affected by the cumulative impact of welfare reform and at risk of financial hardship. The Council must continue to develop its internal data sharing policies and those with its partners in order to proactively support household at risk at an early stage and to prevent problems from escalating.

### Energy efficient Council homes

- Lessons learnt from the first Passivhaus pilot project at Colliers Way have informed the development of the new Swansea Standard energy efficient homes. The Swansea Standard can



also be combined with additional renewable technology such as solar roofs and battery storage to further reduce fuel energy costs for residents.

#### Preventing Homelessness

- A new Homeless Strategy and Action Plan 2018-22 was published in November 2018. Key challenges remain in terms of meeting all priority needs within the current level of resources. Sustained cross departmental working and work with external partners is needed in order to support households with debts and rent arrears at an early stage, in order to prevent evictions and problems from escalating.

#### Energy Venture

- The Council have outlined an ambitious and innovative approach to energy ventures within the plan for Dragon Island. Strong Political Leadership and buy-in from Welsh Government and the private sector is required to implement the proposals.

Support individuals to overcome their barriers to employment through co-ordinated person-centred employability support.

- Swansea Working provides a single gateway to training and employment. This allows all residents of Swansea to access specific and designated support in relation to finding employment and addressing barriers relating to accessing the labour market.

Providing art, culture and heritage opportunities in order to boost skills, confidence, self-esteem and aspiration

- The Council have developed new ways of working and models of delivery with the private sector and the community in order to improve and sustain leisure opportunities. Challenges remain in terms of sustaining the breadth and quality of offering within the current budget constraints. However, the Council and its partners have delivered a varied, diverse series of programmes, projects and events over the year and will endeavour to use the opportunities to promote well-being particularly with vulnerable and/or disadvantaged groups.



## **Transformation and Future Council Development**

### **1. Why this is a Well-being Objective**

- We want to modernise and transform the council through our Sustainable Swansea: Fit for the Future programme to help tackle rising demand and reducing revenue budgets.
- We want to modernise services by using the internet, reducing administration and back-office services. We want to generate additional income to pay for services and help families earlier so that we can reduce costs later on.
- We want to improve efficiency and further reduce management and business support costs. We also want to continue reviewing all of our services to ensure they are delivered in the best way and saving money by working with partners such as the police and health, or preventing the need for people to access costly statutory services where need can be met elsewhere.
- We want the public to play their part by co-producing and helping to run services, such as the successful scheme where bowlers are maintaining their greens, or by increasing recycling at home.
- We want more people involved in the Council's business and in making decisions on things that affect them and their families and communities.
- We want to invest in our priorities like the city centre, improving classrooms, improving and extending our energy efficient housing stock, and delivering the City Deal with the potential to create 10,000 jobs.

### **2. The steps we said that we would take to meet this Well-being Objective**

- Review and continue with Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future Council modernisation programme in order to transform services, deliver better outcomes for residents and achieve financial sustainability.
- Support and train the Council's workforce through the Organisational Development Strategy to deliver transformed services so that we have the right people with the right skills, with the appropriate development pathway and rewards, and that we work in ways that provide the most sustainable outcomes for residents.
- Change the Council's organisational culture to support "working together, working differently" and embed transformation, innovation and organisational learning.
- Embed equality and diversity into service delivery through Equality Representatives appointed in each service.
- Review the Council's approach to procurement to secure local economic and community benefits, in line with sustainable development principles.
- Continue to embed a "digital first" strategy so that citizens access more Council services and information through digital platforms and media in order to save costs, improve access to services and information and increase customer satisfaction.
- Promote digital inclusion and enable people to access online services by providing citizens with lifelong learning opportunities to undertake free computer courses and training.
- Explore opportunities to collaborate with other local authorities and partners and share services, including back office, to save costs and improve services to citizens.
- Undertake targeted and effective engagement to develop more collaborative and partnership working with the third and private sectors to achieve the Council's shared priorities and outcomes.
- Review work with communities, organisations and 'friends' groups to encourage and enable greater community ownership of assets and services and to ensure their long-term sustainability.



- Continue to modernise public engagement in local democracy and Council decision making through accessible meeting times, web broadcasting, electronic voting and e-petitions.
- Continue to strengthen the Welsh language service and language services generally offered by the Council by providing basic language training for front-line staff.
- Make community budgets available so that local people can decide together with their representatives what their local priorities are.
- Provide the opportunity for local citizens to influence how policies are written and services are delivered through the development of a co-production approach and a Swansea commitment.

### **3. What success will look like**

- The Council has services that are sustainable and fit for the future. The Council is financially sustainable and has a workforce that is equipped to deliver transformed services, including in Welsh. People are involved more in Council decision-making and in deciding local priorities and in co-producing and helping to run services and manage assets.

### **4. Progress taking steps to meet this Well-being Objective – what worked**

#### **Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future**

- More than £70m of savings have been achieved since the start of Sustainable Swansea in 2014. Of the original 17 commissioning reviews, 11 are now complete and closed. Of the remaining six:
  - Additional Learning Needs has also been closed as new legislation has resulted in all Local Government reviewing the model for delivery.
  - Two commissioning reviews in adult services around domiciliary care and residential care are due to complete in 2021.
  - Residential Care and Day Care services was due to complete in 202 but will be delayed into next year due to Covid-19.
  - Family Support Services has evolved into the GREC programme and progress is monitored through the tracker.
  - Mental health, physical disabilities and learning disabilities is a complex area and a review of the way forward is underway.
- New governance arrangements were put in place during 2019-20 to seek assurance around financial sustainability and that planned savings would be achieved.
- The Sustainable Swansea transformation programme underwent its annual review in 2019 and the decision was taken to adopt a new strategy. In 2020 a new strategy and plan are being developed combining recovery from Covid-19 lockdown, a new forward looking sustainable transformation programme and budget strategy.
- We have continued to work with the Welsh Government, other Local Authorities, the Third Sector, the NHS, Police and other social partners, to explore collaborative and innovative ways in which local services can be financed and delivered most efficiently. We have agreed with Welsh Government to retain 50% of business rates in Swansea for re-investment in the local economy. Further discussion and agreement is needed with partners on how funds will be distributed for regional projects. The next phase of the Swansea Central programme will include the introduction of a new Public Sector Hub and a green public square (St David's square). The Public Sector Hub would see the relocation of a range of appropriate Swansea Council functions from the Civic Centre to the city centre alongside a number of public bodies within one shared facility.



We are continuing to explore shared services and back office functions with our partners aiming to reduce duplication and increase efficiency.

- We have sought to maximize the value of the Swansea Pound through a range of procurement approaches and the development of the Foundational Economy. Community Benefit clauses are now included in contracts outside of construction, e.g. within our recent domiciliary care tender, to expand the range of opportunities that are available. Commercial Services have worked closely with our Community Benefits team to map the forward work plan in order to ensure appropriate contracts are identified. We have also taken part in the Welsh Government's pilot to develop the Foundational Economy – Foundations for Local Success and are seeking to develop contracts with local suppliers to supply and install Solar PVs, supply and install Air source heat pumps and to undertake external environmental works. We are directly spending close to £180m direct spend per year in Swansea and the surrounding region and are currently finalising new contract procurement rules to allow direct selection of local suppliers and contractors up to £140k.
- We have continued to develop commercial opportunities in relation to Civic buildings and generated additional income by increasing fees and charges which have enabled new ways of working with partners. For example, during 2019-20 we have extended and developed new lease agreements with partners such as Swansea University and the Ministry of Justice. We have also developed a Capital Strategy to ensure that we take capital expenditure and investment decisions in line with Council priorities and take account of stewardship, value for money, prudence, risk, sustainability and affordability. The formation of the Property Investment Board has enabled the Council to take advantage of investing in property with a view to making a financial return, based on robust business case analysis. This commercially minded approach has led to major successes in terms of investment acquisitions generating in excess of £600,000 per annum. Continued activity is taking place on disposals alongside the investigation of the feasibility of a proactive approach to development.
- Working with Friends of Groups and other community based residents organisation and interest groups we are continuing to explore the transfer of community based assets to ensure that they are sustainable in the future. In addition, we are supporting groups and exploring funding options for such groups which adds value to Council funding and/or represents funding opportunities which are not available to Local Authorities.

#### **Case Study: Crowdfund Swansea**

**A crowdfunding initiative was launched in October 2019 by the Council to help improve communities throughout the local area.** The Council became the first Council in Wales to team up with national crowdfunding platform Spacehive to launch Crowdfund Swansea - a dedicated fundraising platform for its local area. The initiative gives residents with project ideas the ability to attract funding from the community, the Council, businesses and foundations through an online portal. The aim of the initiative is to provide a springboard for project ideas to attract the funding they need more easily, whilst enabling members of the community to contribute. Projects can range from building a new community centre or improving the local park to improving a playground or putting on a street festival. Successful projects will be in addition to schemes already delivered by the council. People and organisations can pledge as little as £2 towards a project and contributions are only charged if the campaign hits its target. The Council has allocated a fund of £75,000 over 2 years to back project ideas by up to 50% or max £5k. They will pledge to campaigns twice a year – guided by a funding panel - and Spacehive will deliver a programme of events and support to help people with ideas to prepare campaigns.



During the first funding round, 9 projects worth £44,000 sought support through this crowdfunding platform. They include; Swansea Bay and Gower Beach Clean Stations, Sheelair (a women's project), an Iron Age project, a Project Surf Club, , Secure Grow ( A women's growing space), Gateway to Swansea Botanical Gardens, Copperworks Community Centre, an Accessible Toilet provision (Pontarddulais Cricket Club) and a Brighter Future for Swansea Children. . The Council made pledges of £16, 500 in total and by the end of March three projects (the Gateway to Swansea Botanical Gardens, Copperworks Community centre, the Accessible Toilet provision) reached their funding goal with remaining projects well on the way to achieving their target.

Andrew Stevens, Cabinet Member for Business Improvement and Performance said: "Local people are best placed to understand the challenges and opportunities in their local area and this model puts them and their ideas in the driving seat. I really hope all sections of our communities – including individuals, families and businesses - get behind this by backing the schemes they like. The more people that get involved in Crowdfund Swansea the more amazing places we can create together."

### Organisational Development Strategy

- The Council is continuing to develop and implement its Organisational Development Strategy including the provision of Leadership development opportunities for all employees wherever they may be in the organisation. The Council has continued to strengthen its organisational development programme alongside Gower College, particularly leadership and management and the management of change. A Leadership Hub was established with monthly guest speakers from both across the organisation and external leaders.
- All mandatory training has been reviewed and revised. Our work on equalities resulted in the Fair Play Silver Award from Chwarae Teg, and recognises "a significant achievement and demonstrates the business commitment to making a difference to the recruitment, retention and progression of women working and contribution to broader efforts to close the gender pay gap and ensure the Welsh economy reaps the benefits of gender equality". We are continuing to work with Chwarae Teg to embed inclusive working practices to support the recruitment, retention and progressions on working women by reviewing our Recruitment and Selection approach and how to manage flexible working consistently.
- We are currently working to address the recommendations from the Scrutiny Inquiry into Equalities in relation to reviewing our Recruitment and Selection Policy and are reviewing training opportunities to ensure that they are fit for purpose. The Equalities and Future Generations Policy Development Committee are continuing to monitor the Gender pay gap and make subsequent policy recommendations. Overall, the Council performed relatively well compared to similar organisations in reducing the Gender pay gap by 2% from 7.9% to 5.9% overall compared to the previous year.
- We have established a Project Group to consider improving ways of attracting candidates into roles from across all communities in Swansea and to help support the Council's "Employee Value Proposition". This group has identified better use of social media to advertise and promote jobs and careers in the Council as important and has also found improvements to be made in the application process to support accessibility in applying for jobs. An E-learning module on Equalities and face-to-face training provision is being reviewed and refreshed in consultation with the Equalities Group for delivery in 2020/21; links will be developed with representatives from the BAME and disabled communities to identify ways in which we can reach out and promote jobs and careers in the Council.



- The Council is also continuing to eliminate the use of exclusivity in zero hour contracts. Currently there are no zero hour contracts in place within Swansea Council. Work is ongoing in relation to commissioning and encouraging contractors to eliminate zero hour contracts. The Council also adopted the Welsh Government initiative and Code of practice: Ethical employment in supply chains - working in partnership with Trade Union colleagues - to tackle social issues in procurement and supply chains, such as eradicating modern slavery.

#### Equality Representatives

- A network of Equality representatives from departments and services across the Council continues to meet in order to support and build capacity to integrate work on Equalities. The purpose of this group is to raise awareness of the needs and views of people with protected characteristics within the Council through their service areas and departments. This year they have received further training from Disability Wales on the Social Model of Disability and how it can be applied in practice. The network have also contributed to the review of Corporate Training on Equalities and made a number of suggestions about increasing the reach of the training to staff who do not access IT as part of their daily job and how to improve the information on the Council's commitment to equality and diversity in an information pack to all job applicants.
- The group has continued to identify equality issues and supported the completion of Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs). They have also played a key role in the Council's Annual Review of Equality and Diversity 2019/20 in terms of identifying and co-ordinating information in relation to the progress made with key actions and the development of the Council's new 4-year Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24.

#### Sustainable procurement to secure local economic and community benefits

- A large number and range of contracts have been tendered by the Council and 'community benefit clauses' incorporated; for example, in work related to the Swansea Bay City Deal, the Targeted Regeneration Investment programme, the Hafod Morfa Copperworks, 21st century schools and many other capital projects that are currently on-going. Community benefit clauses have also been incorporated within services commissioned by the Council, such as Social care and Housing. Since the inception of the Council's key programme for securing community benefits in relation to training employment (Beyond Bricks and Mortar) over 10 years ago, the Council has let over 190 contracts with community benefits and secured more than 150,000 training weeks.
- The Council also adopted the Welsh Government initiative and Code of practice: Ethical employment in supply chains - working in partnership with Trade Union colleagues - to tackle social issues in procurement and supply chains, such as eradicating modern slavery.
- The Council's Transformation and Future Council Policy Development committee explored barriers to local suppliers securing Council contracts and this review then informed changes to the Council Constitution – particularly the contract procedure rules - in order to tackle the barriers to engaging with local suppliers; these changes were finalised in 2019/20 and agreed by Council, which will inform and provide the platform for further work to assist local suppliers and their development



### Continue to embed a “Digital First” strategy

- The Digital Strategy was reviewed during 2019 and a new updated version has been produced which will be taken through Cabinet and pre-decision Scrutiny during 2020. Hundreds of projects have been successfully delivered as part of the strategy since 2015, which put the Council in a strong position going into the COVID-19 crisis and lockdown. The cloud first and digital first approach not only improved the resilience of services across the Council, but also made it easy for staff and Councillors to switch to homeworking. Most importantly it meant Swansea residents could continue to access services online or via virtual call centres.
- The channel shift to digital first can be seen evidenced in the number of online payments received via City & County of Swansea websites and the number of forms completed online for fully automated processes, which have both exceeded targets. It also meant the Council could respond quickly during the COVID-19 crisis, developing apps that would support the most vulnerable and those shielding. Other examples of projects delivered during 2019-20 include:
  - Automation of important but nevertheless routine administrative processes saving hours of time so those staff could be utilised on other more valuable tasks;
  - Replacement of old legacy systems with new applications utilising the latest technology with the ability to integrate with other key systems including telephony reducing manual processes;
  - New digital solutions for schools and parents including schools catering ordering automation, a walking route distance calculator, family information services, free child care and free school meals applications;
  - Digital solutions to help services make savings through automation and going paperless, e.g. in domiciliary care;
  - Implementation of equipment and systems to support agile working;
  - Large scale upgrade to cloud of the HR, finance, and payroll system;
  - Large scale replacement of the Council’s telephony system; and
  - A new digital first ICT service desk solution amongst other projects.

### Promoting digital inclusion

- Hand in hand with the drive towards an ever more digital world is the area of digital inclusion. A revised digital inclusion strategic framework was delivered in 2019; however, this will now be further reviewed in light of the COVID-19 crisis and lockdown and the significantly escalated channel shift to digital and online.
- During 2019/20, Digital Services have promoted free computer and tablet courses for beginners in Swansea, which were planned and supported by the Digital Inclusion Co-ordinator and delivered by Lifelong Learning tutors. The courses provided a basic introduction to using a device and accessing the internet and on how to keep personal and financial data safe. An important part of the course was teaching attendees how to access money saving deals that are only available online, such as switching energy provider, which supports the Council's anti-poverty agenda.
- In 2019/2020 there were 302 course attendees, exceeding the target of 300. A grant was obtained from The Good Things Foundation to take part in the BT Skills for Tomorrow programme to help residents with a variety of digital skills through Learn My Way courses; from using a keyboard and mouse to creating a CV and using social media to keep in touch with



others. Research and evidence shows digital exclusion is relatively low in Swansea and this gap narrowed further during lockdown.

- Staff from Digital Services continued to work with Communications and Trading Standards to raise awareness to staff and Swansea residents about the dangers of scams (including updates on current scams operating in Swansea). Information and regular updates from the Information Security Officer is provided for staff on how to protect their own data and those of our service users both online and offline. The Web Team also helps to promote equality campaigns across the council, including Hate Crime Awareness Week each year and elements of Community Cohesion. Part of this included daily updates from 18 March and also involved rapidly producing Coronavirus advice pages to support shielding residents as well as the wider community. Support was given to the second Swansea Learning Festival with promotion through online advertising as well as facilitating the bookings for various sessions. The Local Well-being Plan pages were updated with easy read documents and promoted both externally and to staff using web banners, and knowledge transfer took place so that the Live Well / Age Well team could use the bulk email system to send their own regular newsletters to their email list.
- Work started on the new council website and the Web Manager is working with Access to Services and has met with the Disability Liaison group in December and in early 2020 to get advice and guidance. The West Glamorgan Partnership has a new website built by to go with their rebrand, and as part of this a full accessibility test is being done by the Shaw Trust

#### **Case Study: MiPermit: New car parking app**

**A new car parking app has been developed by our Digital Services team enabling people to pay for parking quickly and easily in Swansea Council pay and display car parks.** The app has been used more than 15,000 times in just a couple of months. Drivers are signing-up in their hundreds to the smartphone MiPermit app which offers users an extra way to pay for parking instead.

Mark Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement and Infrastructure, said: "We launched MiPermit late last year and it's great to see it catching on so quickly. It's an easy solution to the problem of having to rummage around in wallets for coins or a card to pay for parking. Motorists will still be able to use cards or coins at our pay and display machines but the new MiPermit app saves a lot of fuss for those who use the service. MiPermit already operates the app service in other towns and cities across the UK and Swansea motorists have been downloading to their smart phones in their hundreds. We know that not everyone will want to use it which is why payment by cash or by card in our car parks will still be available. We are in the middle of an extensive investment in all our the Multi Storeys, Park and Ride and all Pay and Display car parks , with new up to date equipment to make coin and card use easier in future."

MiPermit app users will have one of two options after they've parked-up their car at a council pay and display car park. Option one is to download the app to their iPhone or Android phone and make a one-off payment by inputting their card details. The alternative to that is to download the app and securely register their personal, vehicle and payment details with MiPermit. The system will then hold their details permanently which will make future payment processes easier. More than one vehicle can be registered by motorists on their accounts. All parking charges will remain as advertised on the tariff boards in the council car parks.

MiPermit has added an optional facility which allows users to purchase a 10p-a-time reminder text message service to let them know when the time they've paid for at the car park is about to run out so they know it's time to return to their vehicle or top-up their payment.



Exploring opportunities to collaborate with others to save costs and improve services to citizens.

- The Council have continued to collaborate with other local authorities and partners and have played an active role in regional collaborations for Education (ERW), Health and Social Care (West Glamorgan Health and Social Care Partnership) and Economic Development (Swansea Bay City Deal). The Partnership landscape locally, regionally and nationally is both crowded and complex and whilst there is evidence of some benefits gained from working collaboratively, there also remains a number of challenges for the Council in Partnership working. The introduction of the Local Government and Elections Bill (Wales) in November 2019 provides an opportunity to re-think collaborative working for the Council; however risks remain that the challenges related to Partnership working will persist or become further complicated without clarity of purpose, process and outcome at a national, regional and local level.
- The Council have worked with the Welsh Local Government Association and other local authorities to provide a compendium of existing shared services across Wales and inform discussions about the future of Local Government Reform in Wales. We are continuing to explore models of shared services with a focus on back office functions as part of our Sustainable Swansea: Fit for the Future programme in line with Welsh Government's direction of travel.

Community ownership of assets and services to ensure long-term sustainability.

- We have continued to encourage greater community ownership of parks and services and have worked with 'friends of parks' organisations to ensure their long-term sustainability. We currently have more than 30 active Friends of Parks/Open Spaces with a couple of groups undertaking leases and considering a Community Asset Transfer. Financial investment in community centres and parks has been significant over the last two years due to external funding, beyond bricks & mortar, third party investment and that provided by the groups themselves. Many of the groups have successfully bid for grants; they are able to apply for funding which the Council cannot. As a result, a large amount of funding in excess of £300k has been obtained to support the parks/green spaces. A memorandum of understanding has been produced in partnership with the groups, which will assist with funding applications. Buildings have benefited from kitchens, toilets, flooring, internal/external painting, windows and general refurbishment; parks investment has been substantial with new playground equipment, MUGAs, events and family days and new trees and shrubs being planted.

#### **Case Study: Community Fund - 1m fund set to boost community projects across the city.**

**The Council are planning to create a new £1m Community Fund for small scale projects in communities across the city.** The fund can be used for local priorities in the community and new schemes like road projects, play areas for parks, enhanced lighting and other projects that can help transform the look and feel of local communities. The new fund is in addition to the existing Members' Community Budget scheme which is currently available to all 72 Councillors to fund small improvements in their communities which cannot be funded through other sources of Council funding. The aim of the scheme is to enable Councillors to work together and fund bigger schemes which could not be covered by their own budgets in the past.

Rob Stewart, Leader of the Council, said: "This increase of £1m will allow for the funding of larger schemes in our communities that might otherwise not be possible to do. Projects like the introduction of bigger play areas in community parks, zebra crossings, road junction improvements, increasing the street light network and other community safety projects could all get funding. The project encourages



councillors to work together to access the fund and, if they want, they'll also be able to top-up schemes from their own ward member funds."

Cllr Stewart added: "It's part of the commitment announced in the council's budget...to ensure that as the council and the private sector invests in the future of our city, local communities have yet another source of funding draw on to make a difference in their neighbourhoods."

He added: "It also ties in very closely to the near-£1.5m Economic Stimulus fund which has been allocated to Swansea by the Welsh Government to invest in improving the look and feel of parts of our city including the High Street, the former Manselton School site and Danbert House in Morriston."

Cllr Andrew Stevens, Cabinet Member for Business Improvement and Performance said: "The community fund is really exciting. Members often receive requests to find ways to help improve the look and feel of local parks, cycle routes and community open spaces. Thanks to the £1m fund it will be possible to invest more in the kind of priorities local people want to see because they'll make a difference in their neighbourhoods."

#### Public engagement in local democracy and Council decision making

- We have continued to modernise the scrutiny process and ensure the Council is subject to greater accountability, transparency and scrutiny. We have increased the opportunities for public participation in the Council's decision making process. Public question time is now part of all scrutiny meetings. Around a third of all of scrutiny meetings have generated media coverage and almost half of all scrutiny meetings have included public observers. Members of the public have also had input into scrutiny discussions on the Scrutiny work programme. Scrutiny now has input into Cabinet decision-making through pre-decision scrutiny on new Council policy and decision-making and there are active Joint Scrutiny Committee arrangements for Swansea Bay City Region City Deal and regional Scrutiny Councillor Group for ERW School Improvement Consortium.
- The webcasting trial is well under way and minor issues are addressed as they emerge. Unfortunately eVoting is on hold due to difficulties with the listed Council Chamber and cost constraints. However, we are upgrading the infrastructure which will address some of the difficulties. ePetitions may be introduced as part of the Welsh Governments forthcoming Democracy Bill and the Council has asked its software provider to be ready for this should it be introduced.

#### Strengthening Welsh and language services.

- The Council has been exploring new ways of working and partnership approaches to meeting a challenging volume of Welsh translation work. The Council have published its fourth Welsh Language Annual Report, outlining the good progress which has been made in continuing to implement the Welsh Language standards. Agile working zones were adapted to include a Welsh speaking area as well as encouraging all staff to communicate in Welsh. Welsh language training continues to be a priority.
- The Council continues to provide and signpost Welsh language training to staff from basic on-line courses to more advanced accredited courses. In addition, the Council continues to record Welsh language skills of staff and maintain a directory of staff across all service areas who are fluent in Welsh and are able to support the delivery of services through the medium of Welsh. The Council have also continued to promote the use of the Welsh Language and support learners by establishing designated areas of the Civic Centre and the Guildhall for Welsh speakers to practice their conversation skills and gain confidence in using the language in a business environment.



#### Community budgets and local priorities.

- We have continued to make available dedicated money for community budgets so that local people can decide, together with their representatives, what their local priorities are. We have revised the guidance relating to Members community budgets, which aims to support the delivery of small local measures that are a priority for individual Councillors and their local community but are not funded by any other Council budgets. The scheme provides each Councillor with a budget currently set at £10,000 per annum and has been divided equally between all 72 elected Councillors to use on supporting initiatives within their Ward. Examples of work carried out include repairs to bus shelters, donations to their local schools or community charities, the installation of defibrillators in public places, minor footpath or road improvements, floral displays, tree planting, re-instating or providing extra street lights as well as a range of equipment in local parks.
- This year we have revised the scheme and identified an extra £1m for community priorities and to allow for the funding of larger schemes in communities, such the introduction of zebra crossings, junction improvements and pedestrian guard rails. The scheme ties in very closely to the near-£1.5m Economic Stimulus fund, which has been allocated to Swansea by the Welsh Government to invest in improving the look and feel of parts of our city including the High Street, the former Manselton School site and Danbert House in Morriston.

#### Co-production.

- A Corporate Co-Production Strategic Framework has been developed following a workshop with the Council's Transformation and Future Council Policy Development Committee and learning pilots with Social Services. A training programme has been developed and rolled out to the Cabinet and key Officers. Work is underway to develop an e-learning programme and roll this out more extensively. Work is also underway to identify a list of all Council engagement activities with the public over the next three years and to revise guidance and support to ensure that all consultation activity is appropriate to need in relation to the ladder of participation (education, informing, consultation, engagement, co-design up to co-production).

#### **5. How this Well-being Objective is contributing to the achievement of the national well-being goals.**

- *A prosperous Wales* – Supporting and training the Council's workforce to deliver transformed services that provides the most sustainable outcomes for residents.
- *A Resilient Wales* – Continuing with *Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future Council* modernisation programme in order to transform services, deliver better outcomes for residents and achieve financial sustainability with reduced carbon footprint
- *A Healthier Wales* – Encourage greater community ownership of parks and work with 'friends of parks' organisations to ensure the long-term sustainability and control of parks and public spaces.
- *A more Equal Wales* – Providing the opportunity for local citizens to influence how policies are written and services are developed through the development of a co-production strategy.
- *A Wales of Cohesive Communities* – Making community budgets available so that local people can decide together with their representatives what their local priorities are.
- *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language* – Continuing to strengthen the Welsh language service and language services generally offered by the Council by providing basic language training for front-line staff.



- *A globally responsible Wales* – Continue to modernise public engagement in democracy and Council decision making through accessible meeting times, web broadcasting, electronic voting and petitions.

## **6. Lessons learnt and areas for development**

### Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future Council

- Good progress has been made implementing our Sustainable Swansea: Fit for the Future programme aiming to transform and sustain our services for the future. However, challenges to deliver our savings plans at the pace and scale required whilst controlling spending within budgets still remain. Our COVID-19 Recovery Plan will have significant implications and opportunities for our priorities and for sustaining the delivery of our services and the new transformation programme strategy.

### Organisational Development Strategy

- The Council's Organisational Development Strategy has been designed to ensure that the Council has a workforce that is fit for the future. The strategy is an essential part of the Council's transformation and change programme. Challenges still exist to ensure that there is sufficient resources and capacity to support formal training and e-learning and a change in culture to ensure that both staff and residents are equipped with the right skills and values for the Future Council.

### Continue to embed a "Digital First" strategy

- The Council is continuing to roll out its Digital First strategy, which has enabled new ways of working and models of service delivery. However, the Council must continue to ensure that services are accessible for the most vulnerable people and provide training, support and alternative means of accessing services to vulnerable people who have more complex needs and for those people who require additional support to access services.

### Exploring opportunities to collaborate with others to save costs and improve services to citizens.

- The Council is continuing to collaborate with others to improve efficiency, reduce costs and improve services. However, the different regional geographical footprints and ongoing developments in relation to local government re-organisation are still hurdles in terms of ensuring that developments are sustainable in the long term.

### Community ownership of assets and services to ensure long-term sustainability.

- The Council has made good progress in supporting community groups to run some community assets and services. However, the increase in the number of groups and the level of support required from the Council, particularly with newly formed groups, is difficult for the Council to sustain in the long term.

### Public engagement in local democracy and Council decision making

- The Council has successfully trialled webcasting for some Council meetings. However, the wider roll out of webcasting, electronic voting and e-petitions is dependent upon further funding and support from Welsh Government.



## Welsh translation

- The Welsh Translation Unit (WTU) were the first service to introduce automation to assist with increasing demand. By automating the translation process, any work submitted for translation is taken from the WTU inbox and processed through translation applications 'Déjà vu' and 'Microsoft Translate' before presenting the translated document to our team of translators to proofread and amend. This has increased the efficiency of the team as at least 50% of work is translated before it reaches translators. This is enabling the team to stop issuing work to external translators at a cost of 46p a word. The WTU are halfway through a 2 month 'proof of concept' period and to date the introduction of automation has prevented spend of £6,000.



## Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's **Natural Resources and Biodiversity**

### **1. Why this is a Well-being Objective**

- We shall seek across the range of the Council's responsibilities, as appropriate, to maintain and enhance biodiversity, reduce our carbon footprint, and improve our knowledge and understanding of our natural environment, thus benefiting our health and well-being.
- Swansea is one of the most ecologically rich and diverse counties in the UK. Its unique variety of habitats and species and wonderful range of parks, greenspaces, nature reserves, beaches and landscapes needs to be maintained, enhanced and sustainably managed for the benefit of everyone now and into the future.
- Our future survival and quality of life is dependent on a healthy resilient natural environment and the multiple benefits it provides to society.
- Our natural environment and biodiversity is under threat and in decline due to unsustainable human activities. Habitats and species are being lost at an alarming and unsustainable rate.
- We urgently need to tackle climate change by reducing our use of carbon and by maintaining and enhancing resilient ecosystems and a strong green infrastructure network to help us mitigate for and adapt to the pressures of climate change.
- We have a legal duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and under the Well Being of future Generations Act 2015 (Resilient Wales goal) to protect and enhance biodiversity and maintain resilient ecosystems, and to report our progress to Welsh Government.
- Evidence shows that contact with nature has significant benefits for people's physical and mental health.
- Our future prosperity and well -being is dependent on a healthy resilient natural environment.
- We need to work with nature to improve the quality of our air, water and soils.
- We want everyone to understand and appreciate the unique value and fragility of Swansea's outstanding natural environment and to play their part in looking after and enhancing it.
- Our ambition is for everyone in Swansea to have access to and to benefit from an ecologically diverse, attractive, well managed and resilient natural environment.
- We want to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity so that its contribution to Swansea's economic and social well-being is not lost or reduced.
- We aim to create a greener more sustainable, ecologically diverse and resilient county, where its unique natural environment is recognised as one of its most valued and distinctive assets.
- We have a moral responsibility to look after biodiversity for its own intrinsic value.

### **2. The steps we said that we would take to meet this Well-being Objective.**

- Develop, adopt and implement a Corporate Biodiversity (Section 6) Action Plan.
- Work with partners to develop and deliver a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Swansea.
- Develop and adopt a Council tree policy.
- Begin to map existing Green Infrastructure assets and ecosystem service provision, and identify areas, which provide the best opportunities for improvement.
- Undertake a preliminary biodiversity audit of Council owned land and where possible manage our corporate assets for the benefit of biodiversity and natural resources.
- Work with partners to develop and implement opportunities to enhance biodiversity and improve ecological connectivity.
- Work towards creating a low carbon economy, which promotes renewable energy and takes actions to reduce our carbon footprint.
- Continue to participate in and support the Low Carbon Swansea Initiative.
- Support initiatives that will increase Swansea's urban tree cover.



- Improve awareness and understanding of our natural environment through provision of information, training and events.
- Provide opportunities for schoolchildren to access and learn about their natural environment.
- Work towards improving access to and maintaining the quality of our parks and greenspaces.
- Continue to deliver a programme of wildflower planting and management.
- Engage with local communities to encourage volunteering and to support them taking action to enhance and maintain their local greenspaces and wildlife sites.
- Take actions that help to control invasive non-native species
- Undertake (selected or targeted) enhancements to greenspace as part of an environmental works programme to meet our commitment to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard.
- Minimise our use of non-recyclable products and materials, and recycle more waste.

### **3. What success will look like.**

- Swansea's outstanding natural assets are recognised as underpinning the health, well-being and success of its citizens. Knowledge and understanding of our natural environment and how we can maintain and enhance it is improved and applied. This helps citizens benefit from ecosystem services and the opportunities of a low carbon economy. Trees and other habitat are valued and supported. Biodiversity is maintained and enhanced, our carbon footprint is reduced and resources are used less and recycled more.

### **4. Progress taking steps to meet this Well-being Objective – what worked.**

#### **A Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan.**

- This year has seen the submission of the Council's first Section 6 Monitoring Report to Welsh Government outlining what it has done to comply with the Biodiversity Duty introduced under the provisions of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. Since this Act came into force the Council has made significant progress at both a strategic and operational level to maintain and enhance biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems. A three year Action Plan covering 2020 to 2022 is being developed and will include the 17 steps that form part of this well-being objective.
- A corporate Biodiversity Working Group was established in August 2019 to coordinate implement, monitor and review the Action Plan. In order to benefit from greater integration, the Group's remit has been widened to consider climate change and the Council's response to the Climate Emergency. The Group is now known as the corporate Biodiversity and Climate Change Working Group. Over the past year, the number of services actively engaged in in this work has significantly increased with representation from strategic as well as operational services.

#### **Green Infrastructure Strategy**

- This year we have consulted on our draft Swansea Central Area Green Infrastructure strategy which identifies the benefits and cost-effectiveness of green infrastructure i.e. reduced flood risk, summer cooling, cleaner air and water, reductions in noise, better mental and physical health, gains in biodiversity, reduced CO2 emissions and energy costs and a strengthened economy. The strategy, which is entitled 'Regenerating our City for Wellbeing and Wildlife', sets out a vision for the central area of Swansea to be much greener, creating green spaces which deliver resilience, prosperity, health and well-being. The intention is to double the amount of green infrastructure (with the exception of open water) within 10 years to create a distinctive destination city with a high quality environment which is more liveable, better adapted to climate change and better for people and wildlife.



- The Strategy also includes a Green Space Factor Tool. This practical tool is designed to increase the quantity and quality of green infrastructure and maximise compliance to the Welsh Governments statutory Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Standard 2019. The tool is not mandatory but developers will be encouraged and expected to use it as part of the pre application planning process for the central area.
- This work is already helping to guide developers on how nature can be integrated into their designs including vertical wall gardens, urban allotments and more trees. Two of the city's main housing associations have pledged to take part with Coastal Group planning a green roof on their office block in the city centre and Pobl providing more greenery in its developments.
- A County wide green infrastructure strategy is also being developed. This wider strategy will be appropriate for adoption by adopted by Public Service Board partners. Both strategies will be supported by Supplementary Planning Guidance which will set standards.

#### Case Study: Swansea - A National Park City

**The draft 'Regenerating our City for Well-being and Wildlife Strategy' includes the desire to work towards National Park City Status".** These are cities where people and nature are better connected, are rich in wildlife and where every child and young person benefits from exploring, playing and learning outdoors. They have high-quality green spaces and good air quality. Green cover in the city is currently estimated at 13 per cent but the aim is to increase this to 26 per cent by 2030. Rob Stewart, Leader of Swansea Council said: "Swansea is undergoing a once in a generation regeneration and as the city is rebuilt, we will deliver a greener more beautiful natural environment for everyone to enjoy, but more importantly one that keeps us healthy. New 'green lungs' will be created across Swansea as we work with Natural Resources Wales to create what could be Wales's first national park city with new green public areas, woodlands and other nature supporting spaces. We know there is lots of work to but we are determined Swansea will lead the way in Wales."

#### Council Tree Policy

- Trees are managed using nationally and internationally recognised standards and a set of comprehensive guidance is available on the Council's website. The Council aims to fully update and formalise a tree policy, which will maintain and expand tree cover; raise awareness of the value of trees; ensure risks from trees are adequately managed; conserve trees of value and ensure that the Council meets its biodiversity duties in respect of trees. The Council has 900 woodlands and tree groups that contain an estimated 250,000 trees and 38,000 individual trees mapped and surveyed in Parks, Schools, Cemeteries, Housing Land & Highways.
- A recommendation from the Natural Environment Scrutiny Report was agreed this year to 'Develop and adopt a Council tree policy, which encourages planting of native species trees where appropriate'. The consideration of native species where possible is already implemented in practice and will be integrated into the tree policy. It will complement the Draft Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland on Development Sites Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- The Swansea Local Development Plan protects trees and encourages further planting. It explicitly includes the planting of trees in the creation of linkages between existing habitats and in the creation of 'Place' especially where new neighbourhoods are developed. Importantly, in addition to the compliance expected of Council services, the policy also raises awareness of the



rights and responsibilities of the public and encouraging “ownership” of the planting and management of trees.

#### Case Study: Penllergaer Tree Felling Prosecution

**Seventy trees, including a giant Redwood, were felled on land at Penllergaer, near to a housing development.** Following a five-month long investigation, the Council issued a court summons to a number of individuals. The housing developer and a number of individuals were fined a total of £420,000 after being found guilty in August 2019 of breaching tree preservation regulations attached to trees next to the building site. Swansea Council welcomed the sentencing those involved in the felling of a large number of protected trees. Mark Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure Management, said: "The outcome is a reflection of the hard work the Council has undertaken to investigate this environmental crime. In monetary terms, these trees held a significant value but no amount of money or fine can replace the value of the trees in terms of what they mean to the community and Swansea as a whole. I would like to thank all the teams involved including our Tree Officers and our legal team. Hopefully today's outcome will send a strong message out to developers or the public that removing protected trees without permission is something we will follow up strongly and through the courts if necessary." The convictions have been appealed and the case is currently listed for hearing January 2021.

- This year the Council has implemented an Ash dieback management strategy to tackle Ash trees affected by Ash Dieback, a fatal disease threatening the entire species. The fungal disease causes trees to become brittle over time with branches breaking away from the main body of the tree. If they are not identified and dealt with, trees are at risk of collapsing, presenting an immediate danger to the surrounding area. A cross cutting Ash Dieback Action Plan is in place, so far, around 3,000 Ash trees have been surveyed on public land, many of which show varying signs of Ash Dieback. All our resources will be focussed on dealing with diseased trees on public land, by acting now, we reduce the risk that diseased trees will fall on people, property, power lines and roads in future.

#### Urban Tree Cover Initiatives

- Over the last year, the Council has involved and supported local communities in participating in initiatives that maintain and enhance tree cover. Work has included the Trees for Cities project which included planting over 4000 trees (whips) abutting Mynydd Newydd Playing Fields and tree planting with volunteers at Ravenhill Park and Singleton Park.
- Around the city centre we are creating new parkland, new green areas, planting many more trees and a delivering a huge re-greening programme. The £12 million Kingsway development has resulted in 170 new trees being planted in the adjacent areas. Although around 50 existing trees had to be removed following assessments. By the end of the programme there'll be around 220 trees - an increase of 100%. It will increase biodiversity in the city centre, help combat the Climate Emergency and make Swansea a more pleasant place to live in, work and visit.
- New trees including species such as red maple, London plane, and birch – have been planted close to the Tesco Marina store as part of Wellington Street's development. Unfortunately while it was necessary to remove eight trees to facilitate two way traffic and entranceway trees they have been replaced with 17 semi mature saplings. The Council continues to work closely with partners such as Coeden Fach, a local, not for profit nursery, where volunteers help nurture indigenous trees. It has also supported the planting of trees through partnerships working with



Swansea Community Green Space Project, Swansea Tree Forums, Coed Cymru the Woodland Trust, Trees for Cities and others.

#### Welsh Housing Quality Standard Green Space Improvements

- A significant investment was made in green space improvements for neighbourhoods where Welsh Quality Housing Standard improvements are also being made until December 2021. Site surveys and preparation of plans for environmental enhancements within Council housing estates have been completed and works undertaken. Swansea Council is introducing the greenery as part of a plan to improve the residential environment. In April 2019, 144 new trees for Penlan were planted by the council's tree services unit on behalf of the housing team. The semi-mature trees standing 10-12 feet tall represented a wide variety of native and ornamental species.

#### Mapping Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure Opportunities

- High level mapping at a macro level has been completed using a Welsh Government grant obtained for initial ecosystem mapping. This starts to identify areas of poorest environmental quality and prioritise areas for enhancement. Improved monitoring evidence and wider public and corporate understanding of the benefits of ecosystem service provision will help to put sustainable development at the heart of Council policies and ensure Swansea's unique natural environment is valued.
- More detailed mapping of existing Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure assets and ecosystem service provision on a ward by ward basis is being planned. This process will involve working with Members to identify areas which provide the best opportunities for improvement and, where appropriate, maximise match funding opportunities afforded by Members' community fund.
- Mapping technologies also helping flood management resilience planning particularly in relation to adverse weather and flooding. The Council continues to work with Natural Resources Wales, Welsh Water and developers, looking to support green solutions to combat flood risk due to local sources, surface water flooding, watercourses and groundwater. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) training opportunities were identified.
- A new key performance indicator has been developed based on the Bathing Water Quality for Swansea Bay linked to the prediction model and public message display. This found that water quality was 'good'.
- The Council has worked throughout the period to be in a position to submit an application to the International Dark Sky Association to gain Gower Dark Sky Community status. A pre-requisite for this is the review of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) relating to lighting within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This has now been incorporated within the latest version of the AONB Design Guide, which is due to be consulted on and adopted by the end of 2020.

#### Biodiversity Audit of Corporate Assets and Effective Management

- A scheme of work has begun reviewing all council assets in terms of biodiversity. Actions include a review of all Council owned Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), a survey of land identified for disposal, a review of grazing plans and an biodiversity and ecosystem services



audit of all Council owned estates land. We continue to monitor and survey the Council's biodiversity resource to improve our evidence base and understanding of the benefits.

- A Natural Environment Scrutiny Inquiry recommendation in 2019 was to insert a relevant biodiversity clause into service level agreements, licences, etc. which relates to land use and land management ensuring that the importance of these clauses is made clear to the land managers/occupiers. This clause has been already inserted into service level agreements for community groups managing green space and going forward work will take place so more detailed and relevant biodiversity clauses are inserted into all service level agreements, licences, etc. Other examples include contracts relating to grazing sites and those with external event organisers that require Council consent before certain activities (e.g. clearing land, special events, etc.) are undertaken to prevent loss of biodiversity.

#### Enhancing Biodiversity and Improving Ecological Connectivity

- The Local Biodiversity Action Plan is currently undergoing a review by the Swansea Biodiversity Partnership. This will update actions and incorporate new species and habitats declared of principal importance in Wales by the Welsh Government since the last update in 2005. This document will become the Nature Recovery Action Plan for Swansea.
- Collaborative working with services areas across the Council and with partner organisations is improving the biodiversity ecological connectivity across sites. We have worked with Highways, Parks, Housing, Education, and Corporate Properties to identify and take forward pilot projects such as developing verge habitats, wildlife corridors and habitats to encourage pollinators.
- Work took place on a Development and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), which has been approved for public consultation. This requires the Council to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity so far as consistent with the proper exercise of their functions and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems. This duty is embedded as an objective in the Local Well Being Plan, is a Priority in the Council's Corporate Plan and incorporated as policy within the Swansea Local Development Plan. The SPG specifically focusses on how the Council will follow a "stepwise approach" to implementing the biodiversity duty through its own planning decision making process. It will integrate greater obligations around biodiversity with some major developments approved subject to Section 106 agreements providing financial contributions towards practical on/off site mitigation and/or compensation measures against biodiversity loss and also in support of maintenance agreements.

#### Case Study: Swift Bricks for all new Council houses

**Thanks to a simple but rather special new initiative, all new council houses being built in Swansea in future will offer swifts the chance to set up their own family homes under the eaves of the buildings.** A special 'swift brick' will be included in the design and build of scores of new-build council houses so that the birds can use them as safe nesting places in the years ahead. Cllr Andrea Lewis, Cabinet Member for Housing and Energy, said "Swansea Council will be among the first in the country to fit 'swift bricks' as standard in new council homes to create homes for the birds. She said: "It's a really simple but highly-effective way to make an important contribution to the wildlife communities in our city". For centuries swifts have naturally made their homes in spaces under the roofs of houses, but the modern design of buildings has made it harder for them to find the nooks and corners they need, hence the need for swift bricks. Swift bricks come with the support of the RSPB. They are made of hard plastic and are the size, shape and colour of a standard house brick. A hole allows the swift entry into the space behind the brick so they can nest between the outer wall



and inner-wall of the building without troubling the roof space or the human family they share the house with.

### The Climate Emergency

- Swansea Council has recognised the key role we have to play in tackling climate change and passed a Climate Change Emergency notice of motion in June 2019. The motion calls upon both the UK and Welsh Governments to provide us with the necessary powers and resources to ensure that Swansea becomes carbon neutral in 2030 and to promote a greater awareness of climate change amongst the local population. It also acknowledged the importance of working with expert partners to identify how we can build on these actions moving forward.
- We have for some time recognised our role as both a key provider of services and a major employer in the local area and have undertaken a range of activities to promote renewable energy, support a low carbon local economy and reduce our carbon footprint. However, the Council views it essential that the city as a whole plays its part in tackling the challenges of climate change. Synergies with Public Service Board's Working with Nature Group's local area objective have been identified and relationships with expert organisations established. Swansea Environment Forum has accepted the Council's invitation to assist in developing its climate action plan particularly in relation to supporting and facilitating wider stakeholder engagement.
- A Climate Change Charter has been drafted setting out headline commitments that the Council seeks to adopt and which it encourages all organisations within the local authority area to also commit. An appropriate date was being discussed prior to the coronavirus crisis to launch the Climate Change Charter for Swansea with the aim of as many private, public and third sector partners as possible signing up. The planning of engagement work to reach out to citizens was also well underway with a marketplace style event being scheduled to mark Clean Air Day on 22 June 2020. This accessible event was to be an opportunity for citizens to interact with council services and our partners, ask questions and provide feedback and suggestions for future actions.
- Swansea Council is becoming among the most energy-efficient local authorities in Wales. Over the last 10 years the council has reduced its carbon footprint by 30% but has plans to go even further over the coming years. To enable this we are reviewing governance around climate change as a whole-council approach is essential. The Council's Equalities and Future Generations Future Generations Policy Development Committee (PDC) has been charged with a specific remit to cover the response to Climate Change emergency. At a corporate level, the Biodiversity Working Group has been extended to incorporate Climate Change so both related issues can be tackled in an integrated way. Work had begun reviewing relevant Council policies and looking at how they align with tackling climate change or where gaps may exist.

### A Low Carbon Economy

- Our Energy Strategy and the City Deal regeneration are key mechanisms by which the Council works towards a low carbon economy. These projects along with sustainable and active travel measures to combat climate change are detailed within the 'Economy and Infrastructure' (although a low carbon approach increasingly proactively underpins all our well-being objectives). Other highlights include:
- We are continuing to seek opportunities to replace our corporate fleet with Ultra low emission vehicles, which is currently the largest in Wales; Electric Vans (40); Electric car (1) and working



with others nationally to urge Welsh Government to develop electric car charging infrastructure. We are also in the process of developing an infrastructure of Electric Charging Points, which will include 32 charge points and associated recharging bays which will be installed in 12 car parks across Swansea. All the electricity supplying the pillars will be 100% sustainably sourced.

- We are continuing to implement agile working so that our workforce can reduce unnecessary travel and plans are underway to vacate the Civic Centre and establish a Central Public Sector hub. This process was accelerated with lockdown. We have been leading the implementation of the One Public Estate programme within Swansea and the South West Wales region. As a result, significant interest from public sector bodies has been established on the proposal to share office accommodation and associated services within a Central Public Sector Hub. The development is a key component of Swansea Central – Phase 2 and is aligned to support the development of an agile work force.

### Renewable Energy

- We procure our energy using Crown Commercial Services Framework Agreements via the National Procurement Service (NPS); 100% is from renewable energy sources. We are also exploring the development of Solar Farm Projects in collaboration with the Welsh Government Energy Services. We support community owned renewable energy schemes, like SCEES, to deliver clean energy and benefit local schools and community buildings. During 2019, the SCEES Solar PV project (covering 11 schools and 1 care home) generated 356,000 kWh. Additional Solar PV installations at the Guildhall and four schools generated 89,000kwh. The Council is exploring the potential for a solar farm to generate electricity that will either be sold back to the grid.
- While Swansea's Tidal Lagoon did not meet the necessary value-for-money criteria to secure subsidy support in 2018 - despite the publication of the independent Hendy Review 2017 supporting the project in Swansea – we have remained committed to the building the world's first purpose-built tidal energy lagoon. Through the Swansea Bay City Deal region, we established a Tidal Lagoon Task Force which reviewed the proposal. The re-imagined concept of an Integrated Dragon Island incorporates the development of a Tidal Lagoon and a large floating development of commercial and residential accommodation. It is envisaged that the proposal will be facilitated through the procurement of a private sector partner as a joint venture, which will remove the need for a large government subsidy. It includes public sector Power Purchase agreements and a broader scope including solar, wind and data storage.

### Case Study: Earth Hour 2020

#### **The Council was proud to participate in and promote Earth Hour on Saturday 28th March 2020.**

Along with our partners and residents, the Council took part in the specular hour long 'lights out' World Wide Fund for Nature event. Cllr Lewis, Cabinet member for Homes and Energy said: "The lights going out at our Civic Centre, at the council offices in the Guildhall, as well as homes across the city, sends a powerful message about just how much we all care about the environment in Swansea. That's why it has become such a special and important event here each year." The annual event celebrates efforts to reduce carbon made to date and raises awareness of the need to do more in future.

- Swansea Council has built up the biggest public sector-operated electric vehicle fleet in Wales. At a major transport conference staged in the city, Swansea Council was being hailed a 'beacon of excellence' by Green Fleet Cymru. So far we have 41 electric vehicles, the biggest public sector



fleet of its kind in Wales. This will help cut our carbon footprint, save money and help reduce air pollution in our city.

- A focus on Corporate Fleet charge-point infrastructure funding remains a priority. Swansea Council has recently been successful with an award of £89,000 WG funding from the Local Transport Fund for the provision of publically accessible, electric vehicle fast charge points in a number of Council-owned parking interchanges across Swansea.

#### **Case Study: Electric Vehicle Charging Points**

**Swansea Council is bidding for a share of £5 million that has been made available to UK local authorities who are developing electric vehicle charging infrastructure in residential areas.** The money Swansea is bidding for will help fund the installation of 26 charging bays in 13 car parks across the city. Each charging point will enable electric vehicles to travel approximately 30 miles from a one hour charge. The Council is hoping the increase in electric charging infrastructure in Swansea will encourage more motorists to go green and use electric cars. The latest bid for funding will also add to Welsh Government transport grant funding (£89k) which was approved earlier in the year and will help fund the installation of electric charging points at the city's two Park and Ride sites. This additional funding bid is key in our efforts to increase the infrastructure in Swansea that is needed to give motorists confidence they can choose electric powered vehicles in the future. Andrea Lewis, Cabinet Member for Homes and Energy, said: "We have made serious commitments to the residents of Swansea to improve our local environment by reducing our carbon footprint. Along with new charging points in our Park and Ride sites, we will now be looking at rolling out even more charging points in car parks close to residential areas all across the city."

#### **Low Carbon Swansea**

- We are a founder member of Low Carbon Swansea Bay (LCSB), a network of public, private and voluntary organisations in South West Wales working to reduce our carbon footprint by sharing knowledge, ideas, networks and training opportunities. Low Carbon Swansea Bay is funded through membership subscriptions and sponsorship and is managed by members with support from Swansea Environmental Forum. We are active participants in the Swansea Bay Ultra Low Emissions Vehicle Group; in addition, engagement exploring hydrogen vehicles has taken place with Riversimple and Swansea University. The Council has also supported an annual Clean Air Roadshow and engaged local businesses and partners by hosting the first Green Fleet Wales event in Swansea this year. To achieve an integrated approach, the Council works with others nationally to urge Welsh Government to develop an electric car charging infrastructure.

#### **Information, Training and Events**

- This year has seen the publication of our popular annual Environmental Events programme, which provides details of hundreds of free or low cost environmental events taking place around Swansea. In addition awareness raising talks and training, workshops have taken place at venues across Swansea. This includes guided tours of our specialist parks, nature reserves and supported volunteering days. Interpretation boards help visitors appreciate environmental and cultural features at both community green spaces and key visitor attractions.

#### **Opportunities for School Children**

- The 'Our Nature our Future' Project funded by NRW has helped to embed the value of outdoor learning and has supported 20 local primary schools to make better use of their local wildlife



sites for learning. It has also helped each school to develop and implement plans to improve their school grounds for biodiversity resulting in wildflower gardens, growing schemes, tree planting, wildlife ponds and habitat creation.

- Collaborative working with the RSPB has helped children to access and learn about their natural environment for the benefit of pupils' health and wellbeing. The programme also connects schools to local Wildlife Sites and introduces pupils to the nature in their local area. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this knowledge may have helped during lockdown as families reconnected with local green spaces as part of their daily exercise.
- Low cost training is delivered at Bishops Wood Local Nature Reserve for schools within Swansea and wider afield. We have supported the international Eco Schools programmes, which encourages schools to promote recycling and reduce energy and water consumption and encouraged our Foundation Phase learning pupils to learn outdoors ensuring a respect for nature, biodiversity and eco-systems. For pupils at Key Stage 4, we have worked in partnerships with our Universities to establish STEM workshops including the impact of climate change.

#### Improving Access to and Quality of Parks and Greenspace

- The Council has mapped access to green space, including access points, and identified opportunities for improvements. The aim is to ensure that at least 75% of the local population live within 300m (5 minutes' walk) of their nearest area of natural greenspace. Work has started on a green fairness policy. Green fairness is about ensuring high quality green infrastructure and natural greenspace is available in deprived neighbourhoods to help improve resilience to climate change and reduce health inequalities. Nature is widely acknowledged to have helped many people cope and build resilience during the coronavirus crisis.
- The annual programme of wildflower planting and management saw over 41,000 square metres of wild flowers sown at almost 180 sites across the city including roundabouts, roadside verges and parks. The Council recognises that native species particularly benefit pollinators and so the aim is to include more native species where possible and also explore perennial planting.
- Eighteen of Swansea's favourite beauty spots have been awarded prestigious Green Flag or Green Flag Community Award status. Among the 2019 winners are six Swansea Council parks including Clyne Gardens, Victoria Park, Brynmill Park, Cwmdonkin Park, Parc Llewelyn and the Botanical & Ornamental Gardens at Singleton. The Green Flag Award is an international mark of a quality park or green space. It is delivered in Wales by Keep Wales Tidy, with support from the Welsh Government.

#### Engaging and Supporting Local Community Action

- We have continued to encourage greater community ownership of parks, nature reserves and wildlife sites and have worked with 'friends of parks' organisations to ensure long-term sustainability of parks and public spaces. We currently have more than 30 active Friends of Parks/Open Spaces with several groups undertaking leases and considering a Community Asset Transfer. Financial investment in community centres and parks have been significant over the last two years, due to external funding, Beyond Bricks & Mortar, third party investment and by the groups themselves.



**Case Study: Library users are writing their own chapter in environmental activism - by tackling litter on Swansea Beach.**

**Groups of friends, workmates and relatives are borrowing litter-pick equipment from the city's seafront Central Library and caring for the neighbouring sands.** They are also taking the equipment - supplied to the library by charity Keep Wales Tidy - to do litter picks in other areas of the city. The Keep Wales Tidy equipment for adults and children is also available at Townhill and Clydach Libraries. Customers, community groups and businesses can borrow pickers, hoops and high-vis jackets before going out, picking litter and disposing of it responsibly back at the library. In doing so they all play their part in keeping their community a cleaner and safer place to live, play and work. Access to equipment helps new and existing groups become more sustainable and helps them to work independently. Robert Francis-Davies, the Council's Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration and Tourism, said: "I applaud the efforts of library users who go out and care for the environment. It's a Council priority to maintain and enhance Swansea's natural resources and biodiversity and actions such as these by the public are a big help in us achieving that."

- Many of the groups have been successful in obtaining in excess of £300,000 grants as they are able to apply for funding which the Council cannot. A memorandum of understanding has been produced in partnership with the groups, which will assist with funding applications. Buildings have benefited general refurbishment and parks investment has been substantial with new playground equipment, MUGAs, events and family days and planting of new trees and shrubs. The Parks Operations Teams continue to provide ongoing maintenance of all parks, open spaces, green infrastructure and playgrounds. Six Green Flag Awards have been retained this year.
- Several roles across Council services and partner organisations now include volunteer coordination. This involves liaison with all relevant Service Areas, Ward members and external organisations such as Community Councils to encourage and provide volunteering opportunities for adults and children. Co-ordinators also recruit, train and engage with new volunteers, for example, through social prescribing, corporate social responsibility, etc. The Gower Hedgerow Hub project is in its second year of operation having planted 1,500 trees planted in Gower and maintained more than 2.5km of hedgerows. It provides practical opportunities for people to learn about hedges and help look after this important habitat. The Council's Swansea Wildlife Volunteers Group funded by NRW has provided opportunities for local volunteers to help with practical conservation tasks such as sand dune management, tree and wildflower planting, pond creation and woodland management.

**Case Study: Coed Gwilym Park set for new lease of life**

**A much-loved park in Clydach is set for a new lease of life thanks to proposals that will see it being run by the local community council.** Coed Gwilym Park is the largest open space in the village and home to a heritage centre, cricket, football bowls and other sports clubs and has two community play areas. A leasing arrangement with Clydach Community Council means volunteers will be taking over day-to-day management of the park on behalf of local people, securing the park's future for the next 125 years. Cllr Robert Francis-Davies said "The benefit for the council is that it retains ownership of the park and reduces its overall costs. The benefits for communities are that they get a much bigger say in how the park is operated and it also opens doors to funding opportunities for improvements that are not available to the Council." Working with the existing friends of the park group, the Community Council will take a phased approach to improving the look, feel and facilities on offer at the park, starting with new signage and footpath repairs within the park.



## Controlling Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)

- The mapping of Invasive Non Native Species has been completed for the whole of the County and sites treated. Species subject to control included Japanese knotweed, Himalayan Balsam, wild parsnip and hogweed. A Japanese Knotweed advice leaflet has been produced and guidance and advice is provided on the Council's website. Commercial Services are supporting the marketing, promotion and sale of services that tackle invasive species such as the Japanese knotweed control service. Advice is provided to landowners in various formats to raise awareness of the problem to help control the spread of INNS.

## Reducing Waste and Increasing Recycling

- The latest data prior to the Coronavirus disruption suggested that Swansea was meeting its reuse and recycling target of 64% for 2019/20. In quarter 3, 67% of waste collected was reused or recycled (67.82%), which was a 5% increase above that achieved the same time the previous year. This was an improvement of the 62% being recycled at the start of the year. Residual waste tonnages at the kerbside reduced by circa 15% in the first 6 months this year which equates to about 3,000 tonnes less waste going to landfill every year. This success can be attributed to intensive communications with the public appealing for their help. Campaigns used PR, social media, online platforms, letter drops and radio coverage to increase public support.
- Swansea Council introduced its 'Keep it out' initiative in February in a bid to get non-recyclers on board with other households already doing their bit by using kerbside recycling services. The campaign involved Council recycling officers carrying out on-street surveys of black bag waste to see if recyclable materials were being placed in them. Residents not recycling were then issued with a letter advising they could be at risk of being issued with a fixed penalty notice if they continued not to recycle. The initiative has led to a reduction of around 100 tonnes of black bag waste collected every fortnight and has led to an increase in the amount of recyclable waste collected. The Council is aiming to achieve a 2,600T reduction of the annual amount of black bag (non-recyclable) waste collected from homes in the city and is expected to save more than a quarter of a million pounds in landfill disposal costs as a result.
- This year steps have been taken to increase food recycling by commercial properties with visits carried out to businesses. The focus has also been on promoting recycling in Flats where recycling is often harder due to lack of space and facilities. Seasonal campaigns have included a Halloween reminder to recycle pumpkins as food waste. At the start of the academic year, hundreds of recycling information packs were sent to students explaining how students can help keep their communities clean and free of litter during their stay.
- Swansea Council is working with Welsh Government across Wales on an Absorbent Hygiene Product (AHP) collection and recycling project. The regional Long Term Food Waste Contract (including Bridgend) continues to work well and provide a very cost effective disposal option. To prevent future issues in the long term, responses to new planning applications now encourage better recycling access and amenities.
- We have continued the roll out of reusable pink bags across the city, calling on residents to only put out loose bottles, pots, tubs and trays in the bags. The work undertaken to ensure the quality of plastic improves has led to the Council receiving an income from recycling processors for each tonne collected, rather than having to pay for it to be recycled. The efforts of residents have led to a huge step forward in terms of the quality of plastic we have collected. Our aim is to



ensure that the plastic we collect from the kerb is a high enough quality to be of interest to plastic recycling processors in the UK.

- We have continued to prioritise cleanliness in our communities. Our dedicated fly tipping taskforce provides a responsive and targeted service to fly tipping. We have delivered enforcement training to a number of frontline staff to discourage fly tipping and facilitate an improved response. We have also started to provide training to some of our partners such as Coastal Housing to deter fly tipping at sites they manage.
- The Council is also keen to encourage reuse rather than recycling where possible. As a result our services avoid sourcing virgin materials where possible, reuse parts and offer surplus materials at cost to the public or our partners. Collaborative work has focused on seeking long term recycling improvements and improving the circular economy potential.

## **5. How this Well-being Objective is contributing to the achievement of the national well-being goals.**

- *A Prosperous Wales* - The unique natural environment in Swansea and its Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty supports thousands of jobs in the tourism sector worth £440 million per annum to the local economy.
- *A Resilient Wales* - The resilience of our natural environment is improved by restoring degraded habitats and through habitat creation and improving connectivity.
- *A Healthier Wales* – Trees play an important role in relation to filtering air of harmful particulates reducing respiratory conditions, while natural spaces have a documented beneficial impact on mental health
- *A More Equal Wales* - Involvement in environmental training and volunteering builds skills that are accessible to all.
- *A Wales of Cohesive Communities* – The social benefits that accompany improving the percentage of tree cover and natural open space within Swansea create welcoming communities where people are proud to belong and experience an improved quality of life.
- *A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Welsh Language* – Accessible, managed green and beach space offers sport and recreational opportunities while Swansea's physical geography and maritime location have inspired a rich local cultural identity.
- *A Globally Responsible Wales* – Reduces our impact on the planet, moving towards a 'one planet' Wales that does not use more than its fair share of resources.

## **6. Lessons learnt and areas for development**

### A Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan

- Implementation of the Action Plan will be overseen by the new Scrutiny Panel for Natural Environment and Biodiversity. It provides a more integrated approach that will contribute to the delivery of the other corporate wellbeing goals. The Action Plan also involves collaboration with other Public Service Board (PSB) partners to deliver actions which contribute to achieving the PSB Well-being Plan Working with Nature priority.

### Green Infrastructure Strategy for the City Centre

- The Regeneration Team plan to use the Strategy to advise current and future phases of the Swansea Central Area regeneration programme. The Strategy has been aligned to the Swansea Central Area Regeneration Framework (SCARF) to reflect this. The Green Space Factor tool is



being piloted on the Digital Village Scheme. Partners and developers will be encouraged to use the strategy and tool as a simple and effective means of demonstrating compliance with legislation. Following the adoption of the Strategy an action plan will be drawn up and governance and performance measures agreed.

#### Tree policy

- A Corporate Tree Policy has been drafted with the next step being consultation at the appropriate time in line with other linked activity. However resource issues are and are likely to continue to be challenging due to the onerous demands of the Ash die back situation on internal and external capacity relating to this specialist area.

#### Urban Tree Cover Initiatives

- In addition to providing a register of tree loss/gain on Council owned land, future work involves the mapping of suitable areas for tree planting on council land and the setting of targets for planting.

#### Welsh Quality Housing Standard Green space improvements

- Beyond the December 2020 WQHS deadline, a programme of work will continue to improve green spaces on housing estates. While anti-social behaviour has resulted in a small number of saplings being vandalised just months after planting in Penlan. The community's reaction to the vandals has galvanised support for the project locally. The Council's response has resulted in previously disengaged young people having a personal stake in the neighbourhood improvement process which will inform future planting work.

#### Case Study: Young people help replace vandalised trees

**Young people in Swansea have helped to replant trees in a Swansea community after a spate of vandalism resulted in newly planted trees being ripped up.** Swansea Council is aiming to make Penlan greener and started a tree planting scheme in 2019 which has seen more than 300 trees were planted on green spaces and in streets in the community. Regrettably, vandals have since ripped up a number of trees along Heol Gwrosydd and Penderry Road. However young people that are part of the Youth Justice Service have since pitched in with the Council's Parks Team to replace the damaged trees. Andrea Lewis, Cabinet Member for Homes and Energy, said: "We want our tenants to live in good quality homes within a safe and secure community - a green environment will help us achieve this. ""It was disappointing to discover the new trees had been targeted so soon after they had been planted. "The young people within the Youth Justice Service have done an excellent job in assisting the Council with the replanting exercise. Hopefully it will send a positive message out to other young people in the city that they can contribute to a greener, improved community environment."

#### Mapping Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure Opportunities

- We plan to take forward the development of ecosystem and biodiversity maps at a ward level in consultation with local residents, Friends of groups and Members and identify opportunities for enhancement. We will continue to work with all service areas and partners to develop a high level map of the County's existing ecosystems services and the potential green infrastructure opportunities, deficiencies and constraints. This will help to inform the development of the County Wide Green Infrastructure Strategy



## Biodiversity Audit of Corporate Assets and Effective Management

- The Council is registered with South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRc) 2019/20 which monitors and holds biodiversity records. This ecological information helps ensure council services carrying out projects do so in line with the Council's Section 6 Biodiversity Duty. A review of how this services is used and funded is planned to maximise effectiveness and share costs across services.

## Enhancing biodiversity and improving ecological connectivity.

- The unplanned reduction in cutting of verges due to Coronavirus has unexpectedly accelerated the strategy of reducing mowing. The unintentional results in appropriate locations has resulted in a visible increase in nature. Work will continue to identify those locations in Council ownership which can be given over to self-seeding, less intensive mowing and/or seeding with perennial species mixes.

## A Climate Emergency

- Swansea Rural Development Programme has set up a Local Action Group made up of people from the third, private and public sector. It has successfully refreshed its governing document the 'Local Delivery Strategy' (LDS) to incorporate a new approach to the way in which work is delivered in our rural communities. The LDS now incorporates One Planet principles to address climate change, by placing sustainability and community resilience as the fundamental element of our work. This is the first time any local authority LAG has used the One Planet approach in Wales to affect strategy and grant making decisions. It is a new way of working and thinking, which will also be required from those who wish to partner or benefit from the fund it manages with Swansea RDP. This acknowledges Swansea Council's declaration of a climate emergency and the urgent need for everyone to change tack away from 'business as usual' to a way of doing things to protect the lives of future generations.

## A low carbon economy & carbon reduction

- We have explored approaches and methodologies for measuring Swansea's carbon footprint with Swansea Environmental Forum and the Public Service Board's Working with Nature Group. Swansea Environmental Forum and the Council have also considered a 'One Planet Swansea' approach to measuring the Council's footprint but an application to Big Lottery was unsuccessful. In order to best measure progress towards a carbon neutral in 2030, we have volunteered to participate in a Welsh Government pilot project to develop standard 'scopes' for the public sector in tackling climate change. Working towards decarbonisation will help provide long term sustainable solutions, particularly pertinent during the COVID-19 recovery. We aim to develop a set of net zero commitments/pledges for COP26 in 2021.
- Our Green Fleet policy will be looking at all options to find ways of reducing emission levels from our fleet, including looking into biofuels and hydrogen fuel cells as well as fully-electric methods.

## Engaging with and supporting local community action

- The Council works with the local community to help maintain environmental assets. However, active, committed volunteers are only one part of a solution which also requires equipment, supervision, training and transport costs. As a result, while the wider benefits to individuals and



the local community are significant, valuable and the local impacts critical, organisational resources are still needed to maintain the majority of our environmental assets.

#### Reducing Waste and increasing recycling

- The disposal of waste wood is a problem, which is forecast to increase due to the impact of Ash Die Back. The Council applied for Welsh Government Circular Economy Capital Funding to support the setting up of a Wood Reuse and Recycling Centre. Agile working refurbishment plans for the Guildhall as with previous transformation projects at the Civic Centre will reuse and repurpose furniture contributing to the circular economy. These plans were disrupted by the coronavirus but will be taken forward in an appropriate form. Moving forward the focus will be on increasing the recycling of absorbent hygiene products and exploration of opportunities to recycle textiles.

## **Part 2: How we have worked when taking steps to meet this Well-being Objective**

- This part of the Review will set out how the Council has worked when meeting the steps to deliver its Well-being Objectives in line with the sustainability principles (5 ways of working) set out within the Act.

#### *Addressing long-term challenges*

- *Safeguarding People from Harm* - An ageing population represents a significant increase in the demand for health and social care services. We will address this by working towards a financially sustainable position, delivering on agreed savings targets and delivering priorities identified by our established improvement programmes.
- *Improving Education & Skills* - The Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and Educational Tribunal Wales (ALNET) Act 2018 is just one aspect of an overarching ALN Transformation Programme. At the heart of these reforms is a focus on inclusion; putting children and young people at the centre and ensuring they are supported to reach their full potential in the future.
- *Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure* - A long term approach that considers how Swansea can flex and adapt to an uncertain future is particularly evident in City Deal projects which aim to prepare Swansea by building skills and infrastructure for a successful future. Using future trends to embrace new ways of working from 5G to the internet of things will ensure Swansea's future generations are resilient and able to thrive. This is particularly pertinent while the opportunities and risks associated with Brexit are being understood. Investment in projects such as the Kingsway digital employment district aim to future proof the city centre by acting on identified future trends in technology and behaviours.
- *Tackling Poverty* – Our future well-being is dependent upon tackling the long term causes and impact of poverty. Our Early Years strategy is designed to tackle poverty at an early stage by providing support to parents and families and aiming to ensure that children living in deprived communities reach their developmental milestones, before they start school. Our work in schools supports children and young people living in deprived areas by reducing inequalities in educational attainment and access to further and higher education, training and employment. We continue to support individuals to overcome their barriers to employment through co-ordinated person-centred employability support. Our long term approach to tackling poverty is based on the premise that it is “everyone’s business” and we have a cross-departmental



strategy and action plan, working in partnership with external partners, including the Voluntary sector.

- *Transformation & Future Council* - In order to ensure that we can provide high quality, efficient and sustainable services in the future, we need to continue with the implementation of our transformation programme and budget strategy. We have already realised more the £70 million of savings since the inception of our Sustainable Swansea: Fit for the Future programme. This year we have combined our approach to transformation with a COVID-19 recovery lockdown plan, to ensure that we have a robust framework in place to tackle the short, medium and long term challenges and ensure the continuity of essential services, whilst protecting the most vulnerable in our communities. Our Cloud First and Digital First strategy has improved the resilience of services across the Council and made it easy for staff and Councillors to switch to homeworking. Most importantly it has meant Swansea residents could continue to access services online, or via virtual call centres.
- *Natural Resources and Biodiversity* - Our well-being, prosperity, quality of life and future survival is dependent on a healthy resilient natural environment and stable climate. We have started work to better understand our carbon footprint, in line with emerging guidance for public sector greenhouse emissions reporting. Swansea volunteered to take part in a Welsh Government pilot exploring this area. We are starting research and development to scope the implications of introducing decarbonisation policies and strategies to inform future work programmes between 2021 and 2030.

#### *Preventing problems from occurring or getting worse*

- *Safeguarding People from Harm* - by managing demand effectively and implementing Swansea's Corporate Prevention strategy and through our Sustainable Swansea Programme.
- *Improving Education & Skills* – The Council have continued to develop and strengthen its Early Years strategy through Families First, the Flying Start Programme, the Foundation Phase, the Best Start Campaign, Jig-so and a range of other activities to support children, parents and their families. Working with Health and other Partners the Council's approach has incorporated targeted and preventative interventions for children living in relatively high areas of deprivation, children with emerging additional needs and universal provision for children and their parents across Swansea.
- *Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure* - Swansea has taken action to prevent declining public funding for cultural services potentially resulting in the long term loss of key amenities. The successful transfer of the management of Leisure Centres to Freedom Leisure will result in savings safeguarding the facilities future. Community asset transfers of smaller sites, for example 3 Tennis Courts at Langland Bay have also taken place securing their future.
- *Tackling Poverty* – Our Homelessness Strategy will help the Council take a preventative approach to preventing homelessness and supporting people to maintain their tenancies. The strategy sets out clear objectives to ensure that the services and support in place for those at risk of, or are experiencing homelessness, are as effective and accessible as possible. Our Tenancy Support Unit delivers housing related support to vulnerable people living in Swansea to maintain their tenancies in affordable, good quality homes. The Council's Prevention strategy underpins the Council's Tackling Poverty strategy which aims to prevent problems from escalating by providing support and intervention at an early stage.



- *Transformation & Future Council* - Our Digital Inclusion strategy aims to prevent problems from occurring or getting worse by supporting Swansea residents to access Council services on-line and sign post residents to other sources of help at an early stage. During 2019/20, Digital Services promoted free computer and tablet courses for beginners in Swansea. The courses provided a basic introduction to using a device and accessing the internet. It also taught participants how to access services on-line and how to keep personal and financial data safe. An important part of the course was to teach participants how to access money saving deals that are only available online, such as switching energy provider, which supports household budgeting, money management and the prevention of debt.
- *Natural Resources and Biodiversity* - Our Green Infrastructure Strategy will help the Council take a preventative approach to managing extreme weather events like the high winds and flooding of Storm Dennis responded to by the Council in 2020. A planned approach to wider environmental improvements in neighbourhoods should prevent need for more responsive action by designing out opportunities for anti-social behaviour.

#### *Working in partnership with others*

- *Safeguarding People from Harm* - through our new regional partnership arrangements to achieve collocation and integrated health and social care, and joint safeguarding board.
- *Improving Education & Skills* – the Council has continued to work through the ERW school improvement partnership during 2019/20. There is emerging agreement on the need to change the regional footprint for school improvement, which had previously been directed by the Welsh Government, to ideally operate on the City Deal footprint; this is so that school improvement and education is better aligned with economic opportunities and the ambitions of our young citizens.
- *Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure* - The delivery of affordable homes exemplifies collaborative working between the public and private sector in a sustainable way resulting in a long term partnership with the objectives of developing homes within the city for the benefit of future generations. The development of Swansea Central North's Public Sector Hub offers opportunities to co-locate council services alongside those of other public sector bodies. An adjacent UK Government Hub is also being explored.
- *Tackling Poverty* – The Council has strengthened its partnership working with other partners to tackle poverty through the Swansea Poverty Partnership Forum and the Financial Inclusion steering group which are closely aligned to the Council internal Poverty Forum. We have worked with a range of partners to signpost and provide advice on a range benefit checks, entitlements and money advice to maximize household income. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council worked with a range of partners to deliver food parcels and provide support to vulnerable people including to families with children in receipt of free school meals.
- *Transformation & Future Council* - We have continued to work with the Welsh Government, other Local Authorities, Third Sector, the NHS, Police and other partners. We have worked with the Welsh Local Government Association and other Local Authorities to identify a number of shared services across Wales. We are in the process of developing a Public Sector Hub which will include the relocation of a range of appropriate Swansea Council functions from the Civic Centre to the city centre alongside a number of public bodies within one shared facility. We are also continuing to play an active role in regional collaborations for Education (ERW), Health and Social Care (West Glamorgan Health and Social Care Partnership) and Economic Development (Swansea Bay City Deal) and locally through the Public Services Board.



- *Natural Resources and Biodiversity* - The Council has forged close relationships with both national organisations like Natural resources Wales and the RSPB and also local ones such as Swansea Environmental Forum, the Swansea Biodiversity Partnership and the Swansea Environment Centre. The Council provides supports and works in partnership with several key not for profit organisations. The development of tools and strategic guidance for developers is resulting in closer working with the private sector.

#### *Integration - Joining things up and avoiding conflicts*

- *Safeguarding People from Harm* - by empowering our workforce to be the best they can be, by setting the right conditions to achieve excellence in their practice and to have a real impact in their work to achieve wellbeing through partnerships and in working towards the personal outcomes of all people we work with.
- *Improving Education & Skills* – Integrated and joint working between Early Years Services, Health and Social Services is continuing to be developed. For example, this year Additional Learning Needs (ALN) training was delivered by Flying Start staff and Education professionals to the private childcare sector in order to raise awareness about the ALNET (Wales) Act 2018 and to develop more robust relationships between childcare practitioners and schools in relation to transitions.
- *Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure* - Tourism plays a vital role in the local economy so it is critical that the Council work closely with public and private partners on the management, development and promotion of Swansea Bay. A Memorandum of Understanding has been agreed formalising the working relationship of tourist trade membership organisation Tourism Swansea Bay and Swansea Council. This a significant step forward in aligning outcomes and will provide a firm foundation for the close working necessary following coronavirus disruption.
- *Tackling Poverty* – The Council has continued to support individuals to overcome barriers to employment by providing individually tailored support delivered through multiple funding streams including Communities for Work, Communities for Work Plus, Workways Plus and Cam Nessa. Swansea Working is the overarching employability approach of Swansea Council and our key partners. The aim of the approach is to simplify access to support for local people of working age who are out of work or ‘under employed’, giving them one place to call and support tailored to their individual needs.
- *Transformation & Future Council* - The Council has sought to maximize the value of the Swansea Pound through a range of procurement approaches and the development of the Foundational Economy. Community Benefit clauses are now included in contracts outside of construction, e.g. within our recent domiciliary care tender, aiming to expand the range of opportunities that are available. Commercial Services have worked closely with our Community Benefits team to map the forward work plan in order to ensure appropriate contracts are identified. We have also taken part in the Welsh Government’s pilot to develop the Foundational Economy – Foundations for Local Success and are seeking to develop contracts with local suppliers to supply and install Solar PVs, supply and install Air source heat pumps and to undertake external environmental works.
- *Natural Resources and Biodiversity* - In order to align biodiversity awareness and decision making across the Council in a virtuous circle, the Nature Conservation Team is liaising with the School and Governor Unit to ensure that all governing bodies appoint an environmental link governor. It is expected that these will primarily be local ward Members given the synergies with activities developing the mapping and identification of environmental opportunities at ward level (these



assessments include school sites). It is hoped in the medium term that they can also report back on each school's environmental activities and this can inform the 3 yearly section 6 report to Welsh Government.

### *Involving people*

- *Safeguarding People from Harm* - through Swansea's rights-based approaches, such as Signs of Safety & Wellbeing, used with Children and Families and Collaborative Communication in our work with vulnerable adults; and by embedding coproduction and a focus on promoting supportive communities through Our Neighbourhood asset based approaches, such as Local Area Coordination.
- *Improving Education & Skills* – Swansea Council continues to respect the right of every child to be listened to in decisions that affect them through a range of engagement mechanisms that fall within the Big Conversation. During 2019-20, 9 Big Conversations took place involving 1152 children and young people and members of the public.
- *Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure* - The Tawe River Corridor Strategy has benefited throughout from close links with Friends groups and strong collaboration on site improvements. Future activities are planned engaging the public directly in the site's heritage.
- *Tackling Poverty* – The Council is the first Council in Wales to support the creation of a Poverty Truth Commission which aims to bring together key decision makers with those living at the sharp end of poverty to work together towards overcoming poverty. The Commission aims to put people with lived experience of poverty at the heart of decision making. Swansea Council for Voluntary Service (SCVS) were selected as the host organisation for the Poverty Truth Commission and a start-up group is in place with partners, Council and community representatives.
- *Transformation & Future Council* - We have revised our approach to consultation and engagement. We have developed a Corporate Co-Production Strategic Framework following a workshop with the Council's Transformation and Future Council Policy Development Committee and learning pilots with Social Services. A training programme has been developed and rolled out to the Cabinet and key Officers. Work is underway to develop an e-learning programme and roll this out more extensively. Work is also underway to identify a list of all Council engagement activities with the public over the next three years and to revise guidance and support to ensure that all consultation activity is appropriate to need in relation to the ladder of participation (education, informing, consultation, engagement, co-design up to co-production).
- *Natural Resources and Biodiversity* - Over the past eighteen months, hundreds of members of the public have fed into our largest ever engagement with citizens about the natural environment. The overwhelming message from our public engagement was that city nature is important to people; it increases their enjoyment and the time they spend in the city centre. Our actions reflect that finding.

### **Part 3 - How the Council is changing the way we work: Where the change needs to happen**

The Council recognises that we have to work differently if we are to meet challenges in the future. For this change to happen we have to first change the Council-wide systems that support the delivery of specific services. We believe focusing on 'seven areas for change' within our organisation will best help us change the way we deliver services outside the organisation. The work undertaken



to date has proven a firm foundation enabling an agile response to the Coronavirus crisis. These critical 'areas for change' have already begun and continue to adapt the ways they work:

### **Corporate Planning**

The Corporate Plan describes the steps being undertaken to meet our Well-being Objectives and contribute to the seven national well-being goals in line with the five ways of working outlined in the Act. Following the adoption of the Corporate Plan in May 2017, the Corporate Plan was refreshed for 2018/22. This enabled consideration of Swansea Public Services Board's (PSB) Local Well-being Plan, a review of progress and an assessment of the evidence, looking at how we could close any gaps and further maximise our contribution to the National Well-being Goals. The main change following the review was the addition of a sixth well-being objective to the Corporate Plan – 'Maintaining and enhancing Swansea's Natural Resources and Biodiversity'. Minor refreshments of the plan have been made each year since to reflect changing circumstances; for example, the Council's Declaration of a Climate Emergency.

The focus has now moved to ensuring that our service plans which underpin and operationalise the Corporate Plan best reflect the sustainable development principle. Rather than prescribing a top down approach to service planning, Heads of Service worked to co-design a structure that would best add value at an operational level. This structure has embedded not only the five ways of working but our Equality and diversity objectives deeply within the planning process.

### **Financial Planning**

Each year the Council allocates financial resources to ensure we are able to take the steps necessary to meet our Well-being Objectives. The Annual budget is set in the context of the Medium Term Financial Plan and linked to the corporate planning process. This overarching strategy is a live document, which is updated as information is available and risk is understood. Our transformation programme Sustainable Swansea - Fit for the Future underpins decision-making with clear budget principles including sustainable outcomes, prevention, engagement and new models of delivery (often working with partners).

The budget setting process for 2018/19 saw the introduction of the five ways of working via a series of questions designed to challenge thinking, this is now an integrated part of the budget process. Budget consultation involves residents, community groups, partners, employees, the School Budget Forum, Joint Phase Head Teachers, Trade Unions and others. In January 2019, the City & County of Swansea Pension Fund became one of the first Pension Fund's in the UK to adopt an Environmental, Social & Governance policy which commits the pension fund to reduce its already low exposure to carbon based fossil fuel investments by up to 50% over the next 4 years. This is significant as pension assets are in excess of £2bn. An initial review identified Swansea's investments in carbon based industries were already 9% below average. Since then over £0.5bn of assets have been moved into low carbon index tracking funds which has reduced further what was already a low level of investments in carbon-related industries. Alongside its carbon reduction programme in its listed equity portfolio, the fund also actively seeks to invest in energy-efficient infrastructure projects (renewables, solar, alternative fuels) and clean tech in other parts of its portfolio, always seeking to optimise its return, whilst having a positive environmental impact. In future continued pooling will take place with the Wales Pension Partnership.

Our Environmental Social and Governance policy explicitly recognises the duty on protecting future generations around exposure to carbon, climate change emergency, and the government aim of net zero carbon by 2050. In 2020, the Fund was recognised as having the best approach to sustainable



investment by the Local Authority Pension Fund Awards best scheme in the UK by the Local Authority Pension Fund Investment Awards

Further steps have been taken towards localising and improving the participatory nature of allocating neighbourhood expenditure. A 1.5m Community Fund has been introduced. This will be accessed by Councillors on behalf of their communities. This builds on existing community budgets held by each councillor. The funds are intended to tackle local priorities highlighted by communities like play areas, installation of zebra crossings, bus shelters etc. where a small investment can result in a significant local difference.

### **Workforce Planning (People)**

Cultural change is essential to meet the challenges of the future. To equip staff with the right skills and support Organisational Development, strategic aspirations have been set out for 2018-22 addressing leadership and staff development so that the workforce is fit for the 'future Council'. The roll out of agile and mobile working has been a key focus over recent years, this investment has proved invaluable in enabling the Council to maintain services throughout the lockdown period. The transition to enable staff to work more flexibly has helped release significant space which has facilitated partnership working and income generation.

In addition, staff are able to work more effectively reducing the need for business travel to meetings and reducing commuting to work. These trends lead to positive impacts on carbon emissions, work life balance and finance, these impacts were evident as not only the Council but wider organisations relied upon agile working due to Coronavirus. The logical next step of the agile programme is to move towards an outcome based approach to working as opposed to a time based system; new ways of working are being piloted and assessed. The staff Innovation Community has been augmented with the development of a thriving Leadership Hub which offers staff opportunities for development. In addition, a new online Staff Suggestions Hub has been established, a Mentoring Programme has been initiated and an Employee Benefits Scheme launched.

### **Procurement**

Sustainable procurement principles as set out within the Wales Procurement Policy Statement underpins the Council's procurement practice. Procurement officers work informally with services at the earliest stages of the procurement process so specifications can be developed by managers that consider value for money on a whole life basis (costs relating to maintenance, disposal and consumables are taken into account). This includes work undertaken on a Procurement Guidance Document on The Well-being of Future Generations Act and Procurement, which provides practical advice to staff ensuring they consider the Sustainable Development Principle at the earliest opportunity. Supplier Suitability Questionnaires also include a section on sustainability focusing on environmental issues, but also address equalities and safeguarding in addition to more traditional technical and economic criteria. Beyond Bricks and Mortar is an award winning initiative, which secures social benefits from construction and regeneration activity across sectors in the City & County of Swansea for the lasting benefits of the community. Our Community Benefit Policy has broadened this approach to encompass all Council procurement projects. This makes the most of opportunities to achieve added value and to maximise contribution to the Well-being Goals as a result of public sector spending in Swansea.

Steps have also been taken towards promoting a circular economy approach with the refurbishment of a new agile working environment. This is being achieved by repurposing and re-using existing materials and equipment rather than buying new off catalogue. This approach continues to be rolled



out across our estate, uses new ways of working with social enterprise, building on the experience of other public bodies.

With regard to local supplier development the Council has this year modified its Constitution to place greater emphasis on using local suppliers to meet our need for goods, services and works by ensuring local companies are invited to bid for certain projects, and we have also sought to maximize the value of the Swansea Pound through the development of the Foundational Economy. We have also taken part in Welsh Government's pilot to develop the Foundational Economy, working on issues related to local procurement and focusing on the construction sector. A new pilot approach to the design and specification of contracts for the Council will allow small businesses to bid for public contracts and increase the amount of money spent locally by the Council. The pilot will focus on changing the procurement approach for 3 construction based contracts, and the learning from that process will be used to change the overall procurement strategy within the Council. The 'Foundations for Local Success' seeks to develop contracts with local suppliers to supply and install Solar PVs, supply and install Air source heat pumps and undertake external environmental works. This year we have also established a Swansea Food Partnership and held an initial event to raise its profile linking to Rural Development and Fisheries.

### **Risk Management**

The way the Council defines and manages risk was reviewed in 2017 in line with the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Work has continued during 2019/20 to improve compliance to the Policy, which has been regularly kept under review by the Audit Committee. This has included the development and roll out of a new risk register application, the assignment of clear officer responsibility, a monthly review of risk by Corporate Management Team and quarterly reporting to Audit Committee. The publication of corporate and directorate level risk ensure greater transparency and scrutiny. Further work on improving compliance and the quality of risk information continued into 2020/21.

The establishment of an internal steering group has helped manage the risks to the Council associated with the UK's decision to exit the European Union (Brexit). The Council's ability to manage the risks associated with Brexit has, as with other public bodies, been limited by the uncertainty on the likely outcome from the UK's negotiations with the EU. The Council has consistently sought to prepare as far as possible for each stage of withdrawal and has followed the lead of the WLGA and Welsh / UK Governments and liaised with others in order to do this as comprehensively as possible. The Council specifically considered longer-term strategic risks and trends, in line with the Policy and Future Generations Act, when undertaking the annual review of Corporate Risks for 2019/20.

### **Performance Management**

Council services report on performance meeting our Well-being Objectives each quarter which includes a qualitative overview to place the data within its proper context. Data reporting was suspended in March 2020 in line with national practice and guidance due to the impact of coronavirus. While some data was able to be retrospectively collected and reported, inevitably some data gaps exist. This is part of a national phenomenon and will impact the analysis of trends over time as well as complete performance records for 2019/20.

Since the adoption of a new well-being objective in 2018/19, we have worked to identify appropriate and suitably robust performance indicators to fully and quantitatively measure the Council's contribution to improving environmental well-being through the new Corporate Well-being



Objective on Natural Resources and Biodiversity. In future years, this reporting mechanism will also include progress relating to the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency.

## **Assets**

The Council is always looking at new ways to improve the way we manage our buildings, land and amenities more effectively. Collaborative working is an increasing feature of how we manage our estate. The Local Property Board enables public bodies to work together to find solutions that safeguard assets for the benefit of our communities in the long term. In addition to working with partners, we have continued to involve citizens by enabling them to take responsibility for assets over the long term with safeguards in place for their retention at community level. Asset transfer mechanisms have enabled transfers to be taken forward for example the transfer of Coed Gwilym Park's operational running to Clydach Community Council safeguarding its operation for 125 years.

The adoption of a commercially minded approach and the Local Property Board, has led to major successes in terms of investment acquisitions generating in excess of £600,000 per annum. Continued activity is taking place on disposals alongside the investigation of the feasibility of a proactive approach to development.

Co-production is central to the development of 'Services in the Community', a series of pilot projects that aim to relocate partner organisations alongside Council services within communities. Changing the way we work helps the Council get better value from our assets. Agile working, where staff adopt technology that enables them to work anywhere, minimises underused office space as staff are able to share desk space, promotes collaboration and transformed how we consider 'waste' equipment and furnishings by looking at how we can re-use, re-purpose or re-vamp items we already own rather than buying new.

## **Part 4 – Governance & Accountability**

Sustainable development has been a central organising principle of Swansea Council since 2012, embedded within Swansea's governance via a Sustainable Development Policy; the policy is being reviewed during 2020/21 in line with the Future Generations Act.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act is increasingly being incorporated into all aspects of governance. The Council's first Well-being Statement was integrated within the Corporate Plan 2017/22 and adopted in 2018. Sustainable development principles are at the core of the Council's transformation programme Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future. The Council is using a question-based approach to building the five ways of working into the budget setting process linked to the MTFP and Corporate Plan. Service Plans have been reviewed and coproduced with Heads of Service to incorporate the Act by enabling services to better show their contribution to the Council's Well-being and Equality Objectives and how they can maximise that contribution through the five ways of working.

Work is underway to involve citizens more in local democracy and Council decision-making and a Corporate Co-Production Strategic Framework has been developed to involve citizens more in service design and delivery. A training programme has been developed and work is underway to develop an e-learning programme along with a more extensive roll out programme.

The City and County of Swansea has approved and adopted a Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the new CIPFA/SOLACE Framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government 2016'. The Council revised its Annual Governance Statement, which demonstrates how the Council is governing and making decisions in line with the Code and the



principles of good governance. The Councils Audit Committee provides assurance on the effectiveness of internal control, risk management and governance in the Council.

The Councils Corporate Risk Management Policy and Framework seeks to embed the five ways of working into the identification, assessment, response and control of risk. The Council's Corporate Risks listed below, which were reviewed during 2019/20, are aligned to our Well-being Objectives. They are those risks that, should they come into effect, would have an impact on the whole Council and would have a detrimental impact on the ability of the Council to achieve its priorities and objectives. More recently, risks were reviewed during 2020/21 for the impact of COVID-19:

- Safeguarding.
- COVID-19
- Post-Brexit Trade Deal with EU.
- Financial Control – MTFP aspects of Sustainable Swansea
- Sustainable Swansea transformation programme delivery.
- Local economy and infrastructure.
- Pupil attainment and achievement.
- Tackling Poverty.
- Workforce strategy.
- Digital, data and cyber security.
- Emergency planning, resilience and business continuity.
- Health & Safety.
- New legislative and statutory requirements.
- Tax Evasion.
- Regional working.

Work has continued during 2019/20 and 2020/21 to improve compliance to the Policy, which has been regularly kept under review each month by the Audit Committee. This work has included the development and roll out of a new risk register application, the assignment of clear officer responsibility and work to improve compliance and the quality of risk information.

### **Accountability**

The Council reports performance using local and national indicators to help measure progress meeting its Well-being Objectives. A performance monitoring report is presented to Cabinet each quarter and at the end of the financial year. These reports are subject to review by the Council's scrutiny panel on a quarterly and annual basis.

Inspection and audit bodies, such as the Wales Audit Office, Estyn and the Care Inspectorate Wales, test the performance of specific services and the extent to which the Council is contributing to the national goals and maximising its contribution through the five ways of working. These regulatory bodies publish their findings; in their Annual Improvement Report on Swansea Council for 2019/20, the Wales Audit Office (WAO; now known as Audit Wales) found that the Council is meeting its statutory requirements in relation to continuous improvement and had acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle in the two areas it had reviewed. In terms of value for money, WAO found that the Council had put in place proper arrangements to secure value for money from the resources it uses but that significant challenges remain, particularly in terms of delivering timely transformation against the backdrop of a challenging financial position.

The Council consults and engages with the people of Swansea and others on how they view the services provided by the Council. Complaints and compliments from the public and service users are also a source of information used to improve services. The Council engages with the public through a range of forums and methods and has recently reviewed its approach so that it is appropriate to the



circumstances, ranging from informing all the way through to coproduction with the development of a Corporate Co-Production Strategic Framework.

Many Committee meetings are open to the public and questions welcomed. This includes Council, Scrutiny, Audit Committee and Swansea Public Services Board Partnership meetings. Scrutiny members in particular use the five ways of working to hold Cabinet Members and the Public Services Board to account. Questions are increasingly framed around the five ways of working. Cabinet Members are systematically required by Scrutiny to report on the impact of the Well-being of Future Generations Act on their portfolio and the way they work and make decisions. They are asked to explain the links between the Public Services Board and their work and how this makes a difference.

The Public Services Board is also subject to regular scrutiny as to how it is making a difference. Statutory members are invited to give evidence relating to the priorities on which they lead. Scrutiny consists of not only elected Members but representatives of PSB partner organisations. The panel is made up of the Chairs of other Scrutiny Committees ensuring an integrated and robust approach to inquiry. Scrutiny has contributed to the Council meeting its key priorities in a number of ways, which are set out in the Scrutiny Annual Report.

### **Regional working**

There are three key regional partnerships that the Council is participating in: Swansea Bay City Deal, West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Board and ERW School improvement.

Whilst good progress was made in 2019/20 (albeit at different rates), regional and partnership working remains challenging in a crowded and complex landscape. In particular, whilst the Council has continued to work through ERW during 2019/20, there is emerging agreement on the need to change the regional footprint for school improvement, which had previously been directed by the Welsh Government, to ideally operate on the City Deal footprint; this is so that school improvement and education is better aligned with economic opportunities and the ambitions of our young citizens.

### **Performance against National Indicators 2019/20**

Each year, the Welsh Government and Data Cymru (formerly the Local Government Data Unit) publish resources on local authority performance information. This makes it possible to compare the performance of the 22 Welsh local authorities across those services. However, the collection and reporting of indicators for 2019/20 was halted because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The list of Comparable National Measures for previous years and currently available can be found at <http://www.mylowalcouncil.info/>, which includes historical national performance information.

### **Where to find additional information**

If you have any questions or comments on the content of this plan, you can contact by: Email to [improvement@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:improvement@swansea.gov.uk) Telephone 01792 637570.

Corporate Plan 2020/22 Delivering a Successful and Sustainable Swansea:

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/corporateimprovementplan>

### *PSB Well-being Plan*

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/localwellbeingplan>. More information in the Public Service Board can be found here : <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/psb>



*Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/wellbeingfuturegenerations>

*Scrutiny Board Reports*

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/scrutiny>

*Audit Committee*

<https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=123&Year=0&LLL=0>

*Equality & Diversity*

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/sep>

*Wales Audit Office inspection reports*

[http://www.audit.wales/publications?combine=&field\\_topics\\_tid\\_i18n=All&field\\_sectors\\_tid\\_i18n=55&created\\_1=All&field\\_area\\_tid\\_i18n\\_1=All&field\\_reports\\_tid\\_i18n=All&=Update+Results](http://www.audit.wales/publications?combine=&field_topics_tid_i18n=All&field_sectors_tid_i18n=55&created_1=All&field_area_tid_i18n_1=All&field_reports_tid_i18n=All&=Update+Results)

*Estyn Inspection Reports*

<http://www.estyn.gov.uk/english/inspection/inspection-reports/?searchTitle=&searchType=All&localAuthority=51&searchPostcode=&searchDistance=10&submitted=1>

*Care Inspectorate Wales Reports*

<http://cssiw.org.uk/our-reports/?lang=en>

*My Local Council*

<http://www.mylocalcouncil.info/>